

# NAVAL WAR COLLEGE REVIEW

Winter 2009

Volume 62, Number 1



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### Cover

The United States Fleet in the Strait of Magellan on 5 February 1908, by Henry Reuterdahl (1871–1925), oil-on-canvas painting, courtesy of the Hope Club archives, reproduced with permission from the Hope Club, Providence, Rhode Island. This cover image completes our centennial observance of the world cruise of the U.S. Navy's "Great White Fleet," which ended in early 1909. We marked the hundredth anniversary of its December 1907 departure with Professor James R.

Holmes's "A Striking Thing: Leadership, Strategic Communications, and Roosevelt's Great White Fleet," in our Winter 2008 issue (which actually appeared in late 2007).

Henry Reuterdahl, born in Sweden, was a war correspondent and artist with Collier's magazine during the Spanish-American War. Chosen to accompany the Great White Fleet as correspondent, he sailed in the battleship USS Minnesota from Hampton Roads to San Francisco. Reuterdahl painted this view in 1910 for Truman H. Newberry, who had served under President Theodore Roosevelt as Secretary of the Navy in 1908–1909. Newberry's grandson presented the painting to the Hope Club, which loaned it to the Naval War College Museum for its "Great White Fleet" exhibit between January and April 2008.

# NAVAL WAR COLLEGE REVIEW

**Winter 2009**

Volume 62, Number 1



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*Naval War College Review*  
Code 32, Naval War College  
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*Editor, Circulation, or Business*

401.841.2236  
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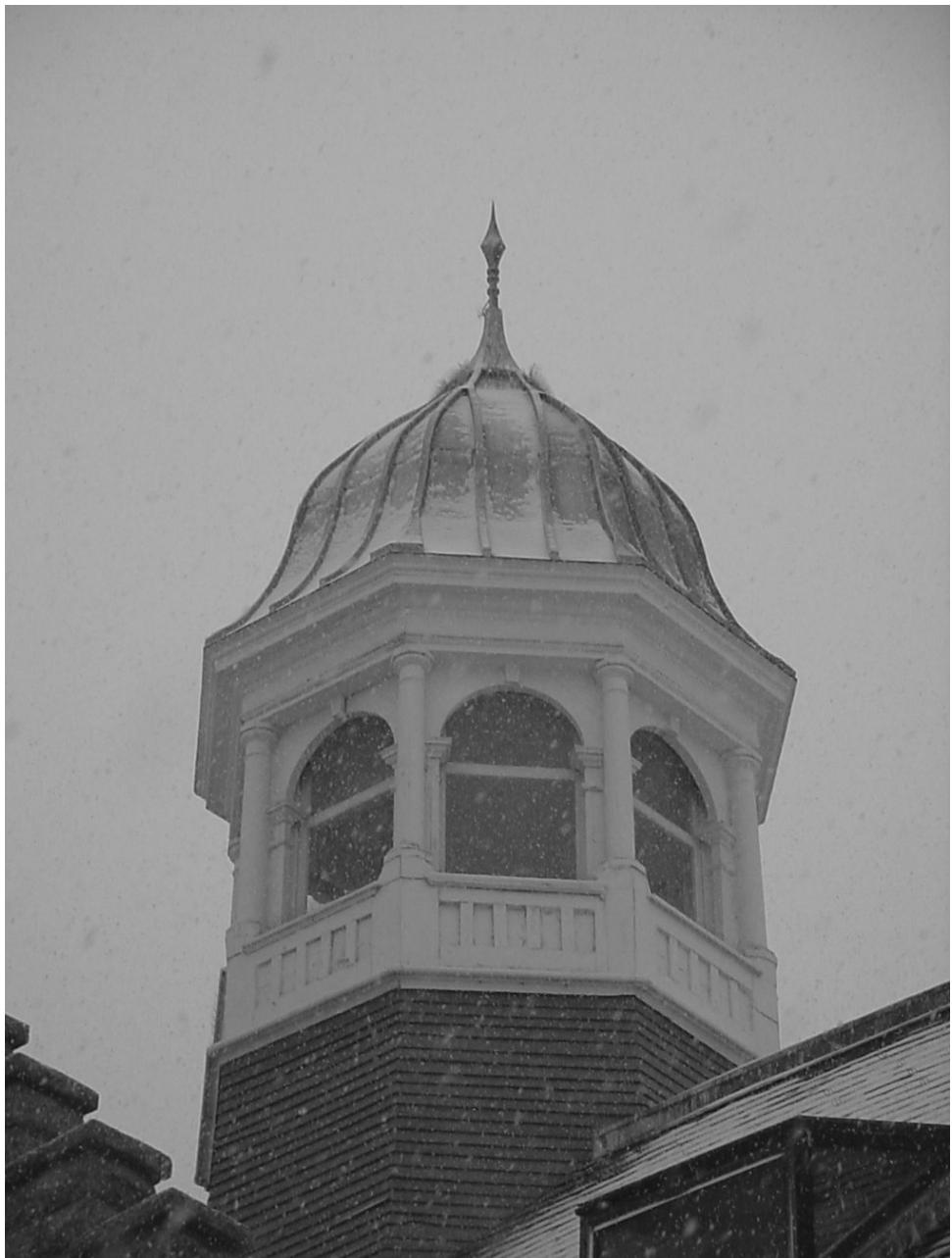
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## **FROM THE EDITORS**

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Senator Barack Obama's election in November as the next president of the United States raises many questions about the future direction of American foreign and national security policy. None is more important than the question whether the Obama presidency will bring about a significant course correction in the grand strategy of the United States. Will an Obama administration cut defense spending dramatically while recapitalizing America's instruments of "soft power"? Will it rethink America's alliance system, in particular its relationship with NATO and the Europeans? Will it usher in a new era of multilateral diplomacy centering on the United Nations and other international organizations? Will it adopt a less proactive strategy in the global war on terrorism and scale down or even phase out American military involvement in the Greater Middle East? Will it place new emphasis on humanitarian intervention by U.S. military forces in places like Darfur? It is impossible to answer these and similar questions at the moment, but the broader national security community as well as the new administration itself will need to face up to them soon enough. In the lead article of this issue, Michael J. Green, a Japan specialist and former staff member of the National Security Council, looks at recent thinking on U.S. grand strategy in Asia by prominent foreign-policy intellectuals that may influence the administration's approach to this critical region.

That Africa has featured more prominently in American strategic calculations over the last several years is hardly a secret. Africa's endemic security problems, stemming from a combination of fragmented national identities, weak state structures, inadequate resources and capacities, and poor governance, have increasingly become a concern for the international community as a whole. The alarming rise of piracy off the Horn of Africa, as well as the ability of Islamist terrorists to operate freely throughout much of the region, has particularly helped fan such concern. In response, the United States has established a limited military presence in strategically located Djibouti in West Africa and has taken steps to stand up a new regional combatant command for the continent. The decision to create Africa Command (AFRICOM), as sensible as it seems in terms of rationalizing the organizational framework of American military engagement in Africa and sharpening the focus of its efforts there, has proved controversial, as

many African countries have voiced concerns over a heightened U.S. military presence in their region and resisted our efforts to locate the command's new headquarters there (it remains for the time being in Stuttgart, Germany; Italy has recently announced its willingness to host its Army and Navy headquarters). It should be added that the U.S. Navy has been actively involved in strengthening American military and diplomatic engagement with the Africans. In particular, the Global Fleet Station is an innovative operational concept—aligned with the new maritime strategy—that the Navy has been testing first in Africa with considerable success. Three of our authors analyze the current state of play in this arena. General Carlton W. Fulford, Jr., USMC (Ret.), provides a valuable overview of the strategic issues involved in American military engagement in Africa and the establishment of AFRICOM. Jonathan Stevenson and Kathi A. Sohn look more specifically at the role and contributions of the Navy to this endeavor. This issue's focus on Africa is completed by Stephen A. Emerson's review essay of eleven books that should be on the reading list of every professional military officer interested in the region.

Our other contributors may be briefly acknowledged. Naval operational art in World War II is the subject of Trent Hone's illuminating account of the interplay of doctrine and tactical combat experience in the U.S. Navy's epic march across the Pacific. Lieutenant Commander John Callaway, USN, provides a timely look at the pattern of learning (and failure to learn) in the U.S. military's approach to force protection since the 1983 bombing of the Marine barracks in Lebanon. Finally, Richard J. Norton offers a fascinating account of the genre of "future military history" and its possible impact on real-world strategic analysis.

This issue also includes what will be a new regular feature: a message from Professor John Jackson, the Naval War College's project manager for the Chief of Naval Operations' Navy Professional Reading Program. Professor Jackson gives a brief overview of the origins and character of this innovative program; in the future, he will update readers on changes in the reading list and related developments. (Look for our own reviews of new books appearing on the list.)

## ERRATUM

In our Autumn 2008 issue, Paul Smith's *The Terrorism Ahead: Confronting Transnational Violence in the Twenty-first Century* was reviewed by Professor Christopher Jasparro, not "Jasper," as printed (page 150). We regret this editorial error.

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Pelham G. Boyer, Managing Editor



*Rear Admiral Jacob L. Shuford, U.S. Navy, became the fifty-first President of the Naval War College on 12 August 2004. He was succeeded on 6 November 2008 in a change-of-command ceremony on the College's Dewey Field by Rear Admiral James P. Wisecup, U.S. Navy.*

## PRESIDENT'S FORUM

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*The Naval War College at 125: Un Tour d'Horizon*

BY THE TIME THIS ISSUE of the *Naval War College Review* is distributed, my old friend and one of the nation's most brilliant and capable naval officers will be at the desk where I have written commentaries for sixteen previous issues. I am sure that the Naval War College Press will have great hopes that his submissions are timelier than those of his predecessor. This is only one of the many challenges Admiral Wisecup will face. Some of them will carry strategic consequence for the College and the Navy.

I have used these pages in the "President's Forum" to convey to the *Review's* diverse audiences—internal and external to the College—the objectives and scheme of advance of this institution over the past fifty-one months. The ideas the Forum has incorporated, while often argued, framed, and edited at the President's desk, were actually gathered from across the institution. The Forum has thus been, I believe, purposeful in capturing and developing vision as it emerged from the genius of this place. Further, the articles, taken together, represent the College's "PIM"—its "planned intended movement." The advance along track, while it has been very encouraging, has brought new challenges and opportunities into view—new external factors into the calculus of the track. The College's horizon presents now a decidedly different set of features from those appearing on that horizon four years ago.

As the nation confronts a dramatically altered strategic and political environment, the Naval War College has been thrust into a position of increased prominence on the Navy's agenda. The College is now operating in four major lanes to meet the challenges of today's global security environment:

- Developing strategic and operational leaders

- Bolstering the ability of the Navy and its maritime partners to lead and support at the operational and strategic levels of war
- Marrying theory and practice to advance the art and science of decision making and command and control in globally networked, self-organizing environments
- Building and sustaining global maritime partnerships.

These four initiatives align to the expanded mission set for the College, and they should drive Navy resourcing priorities consistent with the strategic leverage that Navy leadership expects from this institution.

The faculty and staff of the Naval War College have accomplished much in just the past few years to advance and substantiate this expanded mission set, first and foremost through restructuring the previous model of a single core curriculum to create instead two distinct curricula for the senior and intermediate academic programs. Additionally, the curricula have been expanded and electives restructured along functional and regional lines to better support combatant and component commanders' regional security strategies. The research, analysis, and gaming mission has also expanded and realigned its activities with senior operational commanders facing critical operational challenges in our forward theaters.

The Naval War College first proposed, and was then directed to take the coordinating and implementing lead in developing, the core of enlisted and officer Professional Military Education (PME) across a career *continuum*, from sailor to admiral. The continuum that the College developed reflects joint career-development policy and Navy policy to align PME requirements with career progression milestones. It has also provided a means to impose coherence on the Navy's education strategy. More important, this has had the effect of driving the very best and most promising leaders into the College's main programs. In short, the curricula offered at the Naval War College have moved from "nice to have" to "essential" for advancement to positions of senior leadership. The total throughput demand has roughly doubled. To meet the additional audiences required by these new policy objectives, the College's distance-learning program alone has risen from roughly 1,500 in 2002 to over fourteen thousand in 2008, and it will grow to what we estimate will exceed twenty-five thousand in 2010. Residential programs reflect similar growth, placing huge new demands on faculty, staff, and infrastructure.

Leveraging another key, unique strength of this institution and recognizing the need for a more robust Navy contribution to joint command and control, the College has conceived and funded a series of ambitious new programs to strengthen Navy combat readiness at the operational level of war. These

initiatives—the flag-level Commanders’ Course, the Assess and Assist teams, the Senior Mentor program, Halsey war-fighting analyses, the Maritime Staff Operators Course, the rechartered Naval Operational Planner Course, clustered electives, the restructured basic curricula, and a range of gaming activity focused on major operational challenges and operational-level command and control—were carefully designed to be interdependent and mutually reinforcing, to work across functional and organizational lines. Through this “fabric” of work, the Naval War College has been thrust squarely into the main line of advance for our Navy. External to the College, routine bureaucratic processes preoccupied with some of its individual threads could easily unravel this fabric. Keeping it all stitched together will require great skill and forceful argument.

The Naval War College’s role in coordinating the procedural approach for, and developing the analytic underpinnings of, the sea services’ unified maritime strategy, *A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower*, continues for the maturing and refinement of the strategy and its supporting concepts, principally through Title X war-gaming. The revived “Global” gaming series is just one of the events the College routinely plans and executes here to help align service plans and programming with strategy. The extensive collaborative relationships that have been so carefully built among credentialed experts in national security and among researchers and operational practitioners—across the nation and the world—cannot be replicated or “faked.” Keeping this fact before key Navy leadership will be essential to ensure that this irreplicable source of intellectual capital and engine for concept generation and development continues to inform the Navy’s strategic resourcing decision process.

Along with the restructuring of its electives program along regional axes, the College has made clear advances with its international programs and has established initiatives for more effective collaboration. Among them is the approach the College adopted for its analytic work in support of the new maritime strategy—an approach that emphasized inclusion and international collaboration. The International Seapower Symposium has taken on new life and significance, and it is becoming much better linked into the regional symposiums around the world. Our Naval Command College/Naval Staff College (our senior and junior international programs, respectively) seminars and symposiums are now becoming well established (we just finished our fourth one, in Bahrain, with our Middle Eastern graduates). Leveraging this international goodwill and reach will require extraordinary effort and increased support from regional commanders.

We are in our third year of conducting Flag and General Officer Commanders’ courses, which we have established on roughly a biennial basis, rotating through the various regions. The College is also restructuring internally to focus its teaching and research faculty on regional, cultural, and diplomatic history, on

economic, military, and political issues, as we evolve our regional studies concept (which will be the basis for the Naval War College Foundation’s next “capital campaign”). Also, our Chief of Naval Operations, with full support from our state congressional delegation, has made the construction of the College’s new “International Forum for Operational and Strategic Leadership” a near-term priority. Turning promises into brick and mortar, however, will be no easy task.

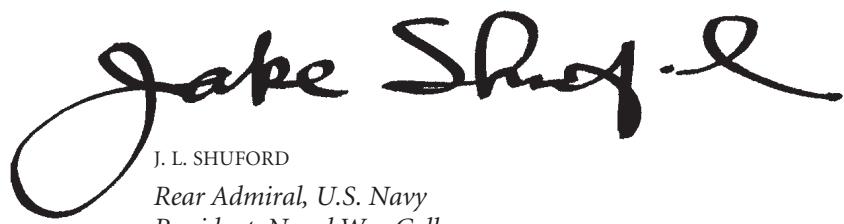
We have also finally got resources and authority to move the Naval War College’s information systems to the “.edu” domain, which will greatly expand our ability to stay connected to academic and policy institutions and to all our alumni around the world (very good news, indeed!) and to share ideas and exchange perspectives more easily. In a similar vein, the *Naval War College Review* seeks articles from the best minds and most authoritative perspectives from around the globe on issues of significance to the maritime world. Means are being explored to begin to translate the *Review* into several of the world’s major languages and to distribute it globally. Again—a resource challenge that will require persistence and creative approaches.

**A “Rediscovered” War College.** A host of opportunities create this new horizon for the fifty-second President. But he has a prominent platform from which to survey and pursue them and a group of senior naval leaders who recognize the role the College can play. In short, it is difficult to find an area of priority interest for the Navy where this institution is not somehow contributing—if not leading or playing a catalytic role. I am very encouraged by what I describe as a “rediscovery” of the Naval War College by the Navy’s leadership. Three successive Chiefs of Naval Operations have clearly recognized and relied—increasingly—on the unique strengths of this institution. There is a growing awareness as well that this is where the DNA of the Navy is evolved and transmitted—the roots of our service ethos, providing a shared conception of what it means to be in the *Navy* above and beyond the diverse communities that comprise it.

External to the College, the nation and the Navy are in the midst of a careful assessment of the future international security environment. The unique role of the Navy within that environment and the densely interconnected nature of the international arena play directly to the College’s unique ability to strengthen maritime security cooperation and sustain combat readiness. Likewise, the direct linkage to the highest levels of the Navy keeps the academic leadership, faculty, and staff fully engaged and current in the service’s internal debates over the future’s key challenges. This in turn positively influences the College’s curriculum, keeping it relevant and current. Also, new missions, such as developing operational-level expertise with the Navy’s operating forces, promise to increase the College’s value and relevance. Finally, the emerging vision of Naval Station Newport as

the developmental hub for Navy leaders offers potential for even greater national and international reach and impact. The College has become a formal part of the Navy Strategic Planning Process and thereby has gained another avenue of influence directly affecting Navy strategy, operational concepts, and programs. Moreover, research, analysis, and gaming activities provide critical support to national security investment decisions. Likewise, the College's direct involvement with fleet operations and processes within our maritime headquarters, via our assessment and assistance teams, our flag-level operational commanders' courses, and our competency requirements analyses, is clearly on the critical path for the Navy as it moves toward its objective of robust capability at the operational level of war. Full implementation of the Navy's PME Continuum will further support this objective: sailors and officers will be introduced to professional military education much earlier in their careers and will undergo professional military education on an ongoing, cyclical basis, passing *repeatedly* through the programs provided here. Ultimately, the College will be engaged, directly or indirectly, with about 350,000 sailors and officers and, potentially, thousands of Department of the Navy civilian employees.

As the presidency of the Naval War College passes from one officer to another for the fifty-first time, the College faces a historic opportunity to increase its value to the Navy, the nation, and the international community. The strategic environment has become more complex and unpredictable, increasing the value of education and research and creating an imperative for both responsive maritime command and control and enhanced international cooperation. The College is well positioned to exploit this opportunity and to secure the minimal additional investment required to meet the ambitious expectations the Navy has set for it. Success will ensure a highly leverageable institution for Navy and national strategic objectives—but will demand the concert and focus of the College's vast intellectual resources, relationships, and reputation for integrity. On the eve of its 125th year, as the College's fifty-second President takes his fix and lays out its PIM, I have great faith that the institution is headed fair and that he will “keep her so.”



J. L. SHUFORD  
Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy  
President, Naval War College

*Michael J. Green is associate professor of international relations at Georgetown University and Senior Advisor and Japan chair at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. He served on the National Security Council staff from 2001 through 2005, finishing as Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs and Senior Director for Asian Affairs. He was an Asia-Pacific Mentor at the Naval War College for the 2007–2008 academic year.*

# ASIA IN THE DEBATE ON AMERICAN GRAND STRATEGY

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*Michael J. Green*

The United States faces multiple national security challenges, but in the longer sweep of history it is our response to the rise of Chinese power that may have the greatest significance. Over the previous two centuries the Anglo-American-led neoliberal order faced three rising powers. Great Britain managed the rise of American power at the end of the nineteenth century, through a deft strategy of accommodation and co-option. However, the United States and Britain failed to prevent the rise of Japanese and German power from leading to a calamitous global conflict. In those cases both deterrence and accommodation failed. We thus face the prospect of rising Chinese power with a one-for-three record, and the one case of success was one in which the rising power shared the values of the preeminent power.

Americans do not seem disheartened by this prospect, however. The Chicago Council on Global Affairs found in a June 2008 survey that 64 percent of Americans favor a policy of engagement and cooperation with Beijing and that 67 percent oppose U.S. efforts to contain Chinese power.<sup>1</sup> In the 2008 presidential election, Senators John McCain and Barack Obama largely reflected this cautious optimism about the future of U.S.-China relations, despite significant disagreements they had with each other on Iraq and the war on terror. Obama emphasized distrust of China in terms of trade, even while reiterating the need for engagement:

U.S. and Chinese cooperation in the Six-Party Talks on the North Korea nuclear issue makes clear that we can work together constructively bilaterally and with others to reduce tensions on even extraordinarily sensitive issues. . . . America and the world

can benefit from trade with China but only if China agrees to play by the rules and act as a positive force for balanced world growth.

Meanwhile, McCain emphasized distrust of China on the security side, but he too stayed within the overall theme of expanding cooperation with China:

The U.S. shares common interests with China that can form the basis of a strong partnership on issues of global concern, including climate change, trade, and proliferation. But China's rapid military modernization, mercantilist economic practices, lack of political freedom and close relations with regimes like Sudan and Burma undermine the international system on which its rise depends.<sup>2</sup>

This broad consensus on China policy stands in contrast to the “Japan bashing” that characterized the American presidential elections of 1988 and 1992, as Japan was rapidly increasing in power. The differences with Japan are all the more striking when one considers that Japan is an ally and a democracy that poses no military threat to the United States. There are probably several reasons why China is not dominating the American political debate the way Japan did earlier, including the immediacy of the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, the shared international challenge of the financial crisis, and reassuring examples of U.S.-China cooperation on the North Korean nuclear problem.

Yet the longer-term strategic challenge remains. Goldman Sachs predicts that China's gross domestic product (GDP) will surpass that of the United States by 2027. Even allowing for China's demographic “speed bump” and a slowdown in the global economy, there is no doubt that relative power will continue to shift in China's direction over the coming decades.<sup>3</sup> China's defense increases have surpassed its already impressive GDP growth for a decade, and the People's Liberation Army (PLA) continues to build niche asymmetrical strengths in cyberspace, access denial, and antisatellite capabilities. China has expanded cooperation with the United States on the North Korean nuclear program but continues to undercut U.S. efforts to bring pressure on Iran, Burma, Sudan, Zimbabwe, and other states that undermine international stability because of their proliferation or failure to protect human rights.

The United States and the West as a whole made a bet that integrating China into the world economy would change China for the better before China changed the international system for the worse. The odds for that bet do not look much better or worse today than they did a decade ago, but if the bet fails, the consequences for American interests and the international order will be no less dire. Given those stakes, one would expect America's great strategic thinkers to reflect fully on the future of China and Asia, even though the presidential candidates themselves focused on more immediate foreign-policy challenges in the 2008 election debate.

However, surveying the big “strategic” books on foreign policy that have come out this year to guide President-elect Obama, it is difficult to discern a clear consensus on strategy for managing order in East Asia. In fact, beneath a broad veneer of continuity and consensus on U.S. Asia policy during this election cycle, there are dramatically different assumptions about China’s rise that appear under the surface in major writings on overall American strategy. Some authors argue that the world has moved beyond traditional balance-of-power considerations altogether; others worry that rivalry in Asia means the United States must avoid provocative actions toward China; and yet others see the emergence of a new bipolar competition with China that requires more active balancing.

Perhaps it is unfair to parse the writings of broad strategic thinkers on the specific question of Asia policy. Certainly, there is a vibrant debate among Asia scholars about the nature of China’s rising power and the proper strategies for securing a stable regional order.<sup>4</sup> But given the enormous pressures the next administration will face, it matters whether the larger strategic context of American foreign policy fits with the realities in Asia. The William Clinton and George W. Bush administrations both wavered in their Asia policies when other international pressures took precedence. For Clinton, economic priorities made Japan an adversary, then an ally to balance China, and then a secondary player in the pursuit of a new “strategic partnership” with Beijing. For Bush, Asia policy centered on Japan, and relations with both Tokyo and Beijing improved. But then the single-minded pursuit of an agreement with North Korea lost the confidence of the Japanese and led to drift in the overall American position in the region. The debate of Asia experts matters, but so does the big picture, and it matters to the U.S. Navy in particular. But before addressing the implications for the Navy, we will review how Asia fits in three broad and contrasting visions of American strategy reflected in Strobe Talbott’s *The Great Experiment*, Madeleine Albright’s *Memo to the President Elect*, and Robert Kagan’s *The Return of History*.<sup>5</sup>

### THE UTOPIAN VISION

One of the most ambitious foreign-policy visions for the next administration comes in *The Great Experiment*, written by Strobe Talbott, President Clinton’s former deputy secretary of state and current president of the Brookings Institution. Most of *The Great Experiment* is a fascinating and elegantly written history of humankind’s failed efforts to move beyond tribal instincts and state competition toward global governance. It is clear where this dialectical history is going from page 1, and that is an appeal for a new multilateral and United Nations-centered approach to U.S. foreign policy. Talbott argues that the United States may finally be at the point where it has

no choice but to work through global institutions, because the challenges we face today transcend borders:

These mega-threats can be held at bay in the crucial years immediately ahead only through multilateralism on a scale far beyond anything the world has achieved to date. That challenge puts a unique onus on the United States as the most heavily armed nuclear-weapons state and as the leading producer of greenhouse gases. (p. 395)

Ultimately, Talbott sees the megathreats of climate change and proliferation trumping the dangers created by shifting distribution of power in the international system. In fact, he sees these threats as opportunities to build the kind of global governance that might have prevented war in the past as rising and falling powers collided.

The few areas where Talbott touches on Asia strategy reflect his broader Lockean assumptions about the intentions of states within the system and his focus on the United States as implicitly one of the greatest sources of instability in recent history. For example, his vision of a future order assumes that constraining American and allied military capabilities through multilateral treaties, such as a fissile-material cutoff and the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty, will reduce the dangers of confrontation with rising powers such as China. Thus, failure to negotiate a new ABM treaty will likely mean that “Russia and China respond by building up their number of offensive missiles and taking a variety of countermeasures, including antisatellite capabilities, in order to overwhelm, penetrate, and blind a U.S. missile defense system” (p. 397). With North Korea, he assumes that a fair deal can be achieved, arguing that “the United States will need to establish diplomatic relations with the governments in Tehran and Pyongyang in exchange for their willingness to get rid of existing weapons in the North Korean case and stop a development program in the Iranian one” (p. 398).

For Talbott, the Hobbesian forces in international relations are fissile materials, greenhouse gases, and other impersonal elements, and the major obstacle to states’ working in concert at this critical moment of history is ideology—and particularly, as he sees it, the Bush administration’s “unilateralism” and pursuit of preeminence. The implicit assumption in that charge is that self-constraint through adherence to multilateral treaties by the United States would lead to a decline in many of the threats we face, including China’s rapidly increasing conventional and nuclear weapons capabilities. However, the evidence is quite strong that China’s military buildup and strategic reach are proceeding apace with the growing resources and ambitions of a rising power that does not fully share the values of the prevailing neoliberal international order. Certainly Beijing’s January 2007 antisatellite test, ten years of double-digit defense

spending increases, and the discovery of a new PLA Navy base on Hainan Island all suggest that Chinese military capabilities are driven by requirements well beyond the Taiwan contingency. Similarly, while there is much evidence to suggest that North Korea seeks normalized relations with the United States, there is very little evidence to support the proposition that Pyongyang would give up nuclear weapons to do so. It does not fit the worldview of *The Great Experiment* that states like North Korea would see it as essential to their survival to exist outside the international system while increasing their leverage on major powers through the possession of nuclear weapons, nor that multilateral agreements like the Non-Proliferation Treaty or institutions like the United Nations are ill equipped to stop proliferation by leaders like Kim Jong Il.

Nevertheless, *The Great Experiment* does offer at least half of a successful menu for improving stability and American influence in Asia. Asia is a region that struggles to find patterns of multilateral security cooperation in order to tame the forces of rivalry and to reduce uncertainty. Talbott singles out for action precisely the kind of challenges that will help bring greater cohesion to Asia's burgeoning multilateralism. The big transnational challenges Asia faces, from potential pandemics to terrorism and proliferation, require improved international governance and cooperation. In many ways, these issues—particularly climate change—cannot be addressed on a global level without first finding a framework for cooperation with China. Working on these issues productively with Beijing may help to reduce the dangers of rivalry and competition inherent in China's rise.

However, missing almost entirely from the transnational threat focus and appeals for world governance of *The Great Experiment* is the Hobbesian side of Asian international relations today. Despite the twenty-first-century agenda of challenges that Talbott illuminates, Asia retains many characteristics of nineteenth-century great-power rivalry. The United States must attend to balance-of-power considerations in the region, or Asian states will do so themselves—and perhaps to our detriment.

### DO NO HARM

In *Memo to the President Elect*, former secretary of state Madeleine Albright focuses on more traditional state-to-state relations in addition to the megathreats addressed by Talbott. Her overarching agenda is more modest than Talbott's but in many ways no less daunting. She recommends that the new president give priority to five challenges:

- Developing a more productive working relationship with the Arab and Muslim worlds

- Restoring an international consensus in opposition to the spread of nuclear weapons
- Defending democratic values against a new generation of dictators and demagogues
- Attacking poverty, ignorance, and disease
- Addressing the intertwined global issues of energy supply and environmental health.

Albright also reminds the new president of the fact that he will be simultaneously inheriting three conflicts—Iraq, Afghanistan, and the struggle against al-Qa‘ida.

Albright is careful to devote a chapter to Asia, even in the face of this imposing list of pressures on the new president. She implicitly acknowledges the successes of the Bush administration, recommending no major changes other than in North Korea policy (where she advocates a less confrontational approach along the lines latterly pursued by the Bush White House). In fact, she levels an indirect criticism at her own administration’s decision in June 1998 to signal that China was more important than Japan, when President Clinton refused to stop in Japan on his way to an eight-day tour around China. As she notes to the new president, “When you first visit East Asia, you are likely to have China uppermost in mind. Your initial destination, however, should be Tokyo. A loyal ally deserves precedence” (p. 178). Albright also acknowledges the centrality of the Taiwan issue in U.S. relations with China and for broader stability in Asia, stressing that the new president must provide assurances to Chinese president Hu Jintao on America’s “one China policy” but also recalling that the Chinese backed away from conflict over Taiwan in 1996 “because they didn’t think they could prevail in a confrontation with the United States” (p. 195).

For Albright, state-to-state relations still figure prominently in Asia, and U.S. strategy for the region should focus on maintaining the right “balance,” in which the “United States acts as a kind of friendly referee” among the many rivals (p. 177). For much of the postwar period this approach was sometimes also called “double containment,” meaning that the goal of U.S. policy was to keep Russia, China, and Japan from developing significant military capabilities. Albright writes critically of former Japanese prime minister Shinzo Abe’s security pact with Australia and his symbolic upgrading of Japan’s Defense Agency to a ministry, suggesting also that the Bush administration pushed the limits of regional tolerance in cooperating on theater missile defense and encouraging Japan to send “high-tech” destroyers to the Indian Ocean in support of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM (p. 179). Lifting restrictions further on Japan’s security

role, she warns, would “likely spur China into an even more rapid buildup of its own, while pushing Korea into a closer relationship with Beijing.”

This static view of Japan’s role stands in contrast to Albright’s warning that the United States alone will not be able to continue dissuading and deterring China from military action, as it did in 1996. As she cautions, “Although its military remains far inferior to that of the United States, China is modernizing with a single

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*We will need a strategy that builds regional co-operation and strengthens international governance while we attend at the same time to the fundamental nineteenth-century balance-of-power issues.*

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contingency uppermost in its mind, while our armed forces are stretched thin” (p. 196). The reality is that the closer U.S.-Japan alliance relationship begun in the mid-1990s has now virtually guaranteed that China has to consider

not just U.S. but also Japanese forces as obstacles to the use of force against Taiwan. That increases dissuasion, deterrence, and stability. Moreover, Japan’s defense budget remains below 1 percent of GDP, and its defense spending is declining in real terms, in contrast to China’s major defense-spending increases. A dangerous arms race might result from internal balancing (significant unilateral Japanese offensive military capabilities), but as of now, that is not happening. Instead, Japan is pursuing external balancing through closer ties to the United States, as well as with India and Australia. That strategy minimizes the danger of an arms race while complicating Chinese military planning and serving notice to Beijing of the broader strategic implications for Chinese interests of an unchecked PLA military buildup. Also, while Japan continues to have difficult relations with its neighbors over history, the Chicago Council on Global Affairs ranks Japan ahead of China (and behind only the United States) in terms of “soft power” in the region.<sup>6</sup>

Albright’s *Memo to the President Elect* gives good advice to the new president on Asia (including the recommendation that he bring a fork to Japan). It puts allies front and center in U.S. Asia strategy—at least symbolically—and acknowledges the complex and multifaceted strategy needed to manage the rise of Chinese power. It also eschews utopian visions of a new multilateral security framework in Asia, where she urges the president to take a “light hand” (p. 199). But Albright’s strategy for Asia also asks the new president to work with one hand tied behind his back. Shaping China’s strategic choices requires active engagement of Beijing, as well as the development of tighter and increasingly agile alliance relationships in the region, to ensure a balance of power that encourages China’s strategic role to develop in a benign direction.

Albright is not alone in writing a grand strategy that puts the United States in the role of mediator in Asia. In *Statecraft and How to Restore America’s Standing*

*in the World*, veteran Middle East peace negotiator Dennis Ross also recommends that the next president work to prevent a security dilemma with China where hedging becomes a “self-fulfilling prophecy” (p. 322). Ross rightly recognizes that the center of gravity is shifting to the Pacific and stresses that the United States must demonstrate to China that when it plays by the rules, those rules will not be used against Beijing (p. 330). However, the entire thrust of the argument is that China’s rise can be managed through the “elemental statecraft” of embedding an agenda for cooperation in bilateral and multilateral mechanisms that gradually reduces the “perceived need to hedge” (p. 331). Ross is absolutely right about the need to expand win-win cooperation with China in this way, but missing entirely from the strategy is any attention to maintaining the regional balance of power. Indeed, U.S. alliances in Asia are mentioned in *Statecraft* only in terms of reducing the security dilemma with China, since Beijing will see the U.S.-Japan alliance as having benefits for Beijing, “insofar as that presence and those alliances limit the Japanese impulse to remilitarize its posture in Asia” (p. 330).

In *The Post-American World* Fareed Zakaria also recognizes the shift of power to China and Asia, and he notes that this trend should not be viewed as a simple story of American decline and Chinese rise but rather as “the rise of the rest.” Precisely because India and other states in the system are growing in power and ambition at the same time as China, the United States can continue leading in international affairs if it learns to broker and mediate relations among these aspiring powers and to build coalitions around different challenges. Zakaria is exactly right when he argues that the United States must learn to share power, create coalitions, build legitimacy, and define the global agenda. His model for such statecraft is Bismarck. But unlike Bismarck, Zakaria recoils at the notion that part of American strategy must focus on balance of power. He acknowledges that lines must be drawn with China, “but [the United States must] also recognize that it cannot draw lines everywhere.” Ultimately, “*‘balancing’ against a rising power would be a dangerous, destabilizing, and potentially self-fulfilling policy.* Were Washington to balance against China, before Beijing had shown any serious inclination to disrupt the international order, it would find itself isolated—and would pay heavy costs economically and politically for itself being the disruptive force” (p. 236, emphasis supplied).

It is striking that Zakaria is not talking about “containment” (a strategy that would be both self-defeating and virtually impossible to implement vis-à-vis China) but “balancing”—a strategy that Japan, India, and increasingly South Korea are playing every day toward Beijing, even as their economic interdependence grows with China. It is a strategy that these nations look to the United

States to continue playing even in the complex interwoven international system we live in today.

### A NEW CLASH OF IDEOLOGIES?

Robert Kagan's *The Return of History and the End of Dreams* goes in an entirely different direction from Talbott, Albright, Ross, and Zakaria. It offers a strategic worldview that is as sweeping as Talbott's but focuses on the Hobbesian and not the Lockean world before us. Kagan's whipping boy is Francis Fukuyama's *The End of History and the Last Man* and the subsequent post–Cold War writings that anticipated a new peaceful international order, in which governments were expected increasingly to embrace liberal democracy after the collapse of communism. For Kagan, the world has again returned to normalcy and nation-states remain as strong as ever, fueled by ambitious nationalism. Now there is a new collision of ideologies: between the democratic West and an authoritarian bloc centering on China and Russia.

Kagan's dissecting of the new ideational contest between East and West has far more nuance than his critics usually attribute to it. He acknowledges that the ideological contest between Western liberalism and Eastern autocracy has none of the neatness of the divisions of the Cold War. He points out that the huge economic interdependence of the West on China for commercial relations and on Russia for oil has blurred the lines between friends and adversaries. He also highlights the weaknesses within China's own political system and its unattractiveness to most major powers in the world.

At the same time, Kagan also hits on some central truths about the dynamics of East Asian security that are missing from most of the other books on American grand strategy. It is hard to refute his assertion, for example, that “today the Chinese believe that their nation’s ancient centrality, appropriately adjusted for the times and circumstances, can, should and will be restored” or that they “consider the trend toward Chinese regional hegemony unstoppable” (p. 27). He is also right when he warns that concerted action on nuclear nonproliferation of the kind advocated by Talbott is being undermined by the clash of great powers with competing forms of government, as China and Russia run interference for Iran while the United States and Europe support India’s nuclear ambitions (p. 77). This ideological divide also hampers international action on such humanitarian crises as Darfur, Burma, and Zimbabwe.

Kagan sees the authoritarian camp taking shape in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), which the Russians celebrate as an anti-NATO alliance and the Chinese as another vehicle to expand their influence in Asia. In contrast, he sees democratic nations increasingly working together “beneath the radar” to counter the authoritarian principle of “noninterference in internal affairs” and

encourage the embrace of universal values. Kagan may at this point be overstating the solidarity of the SCO, particularly in the wake of China's refusal at the August 2008 SCO meeting to endorse Russia's justification for the attack on Georgia. On the other hand, there may be more movement among like-minded democracies than he suggests. In addition to Indian prime minister Manmohan Singh's declaration in 2005 that the "idea of India" is one of a democracy and that "all countries of the world will evolve in this direction as we move forward into the 21st Century," and Japanese prime minister Taro Aso's concept of building an "arc of freedom and prosperity" in Asia, other nations in the region have begun branding their national identities in terms of universal values.<sup>7</sup> Indonesia championed the inclusion of democratic norms in the new charter for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and held up its ratification because of weak enforcement mechanisms for the charter's proposed human rights commission. The new conservative government of South Korea has hosted the first senior officials' meeting of the Asia-Pacific Democracy Forum, echoing simi-

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lar sentiments to Japan's and India's about the idea of Korea being a model of democratic development.

The difficulty in applying Kagan's insights to policy lies in the question he himself asks: Are the democracies ready to step up and take the lead in shaping the emerging international order? His proposal for a global concert or league of democracies became a political hot potato in this election year, but in the book it is a fairly modest proposition—convening "perhaps informally at first, but with the aim of holding regular meetings and consultations among democratic nations on the issues of the day . . . to signal a commitment to the democratic idea." That much is already happening with the Asia-Pacific Democracy Forum, the U.S.-Japan-Australia Trilateral Strategic Dialogue, and quiet meetings before meetings of Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, among the "APEC Friendlies." Building on those examples makes perfect sense.

The higher bar to cross is Kagan's proposal that the concert, or league, of democracies might pool resources to address issues that cannot be addressed at the United Nations (pp. 97–98). The fact is that this is also happening, in the form of U.S.-Japan–Republic of Korea trilateral strategy meetings on North Korea and in the G-7 agreements on financial sanctions toward Iran, for example. But an overt attempt to supplant the United Nations will be a difficult sell even among nations (like Indonesia, India, Korea, and Japan) that are already highlighting their unique roles in demonstrating the importance of democratic values to the

region. The sell will be even more difficult if it is posed as a counterbloc to the SCO, since none of China's neighbors are eager to risk trade or political relations with Beijing by appearing to align with either of two adversarial camps. Kagan is right that the United States must strengthen coordination among democracies, but in Asia that strategy will be more successful if it is regionally focused (i.e., not a "global concert") and if the lead is taken by Asian democracies wherever possible. The danger in pushing too hard for an American-led bloc is that the United States may end up being the only member.

Kagan's *The Return of History* stands out among the big strategic books that have come out this presidential election cycle because it focuses on state-to-state relations, balance of power, and ideologies. Kagan also stands out in one other respect—unlike Albright, Ross, and Talbott, he was on the losing side of this presidential election.

### THE NEED FOR A COMPREHENSIVE ASIA STRATEGY

There is one thing that every author preparing a grand strategy for the new administration does agree on, and that is the indispensable role that the United States plays in Asia. Yet few seem to come to terms with the fundamental sources of American leadership in the region. Certainly, the United States has standing as an "honest broker" in a region burdened with historical mistrust and nationalism, as Albright argues. But the United States is not really neutral when it comes to the rise of Chinese power. If it were, it would seek to accommodate China by allowing Beijing to shift the terms of the neoliberal order to benefit a more mercantilist view of the world and a more Sino-centric view of Asia. Instead, we have sought to shape Chinese behavior over the past ten years to encourage Beijing to become what former deputy secretary of state Bob Zoellick calls a "responsible stakeholder." We have done this by building a positive agenda for cooperation with China where we can—for example, on North Korea—but also by demonstrating the benefits to China of playing by the rules of the neoliberal order, as well as the downside risk for China of moving in a less responsible direction.

Shaping Chinese behavior requires us to demonstrate not only that we are prepared to defend American interests (hedging) but also that other major powers in the region share our determination to avoid a more mercantilist international order or Sino-centric Asian order (shaping). Placing our hopes in the United Nations system as Talbott suggests will not sustain that proposition, though it may reinforce patterns of cooperation with China and help to bring China into international frameworks on challenges like climate change.

The reality is that we will need a strategy that builds regional cooperation based on twenty-first-century concepts of globalization and that strengthens international governance while we attend at the same time to the fundamental nineteenth-century balance-of-power issues that Asia's great powers watch with

such intensity. The latter part of the strategy requires a disciplined focus on our allies and their interests so that we collectively reinforce a regional order that benefits China as Beijing reassures its neighbors that it is playing by the right rules. As one bipartisan group of Asia experts (including this author) wrote in March 2007, “To get China right, we need to get Asia right.”<sup>8</sup> We need to both engage and balance.

The steady erosion of balance-of-power logic in the big books on international strategy in recent years is an unmistakable trend. Richard Haass’s “The Age of Nonpolarity,” in *Foreign Affairs*, and the “Phoenix Initiative” on the American role in the world, led by prominent advisers to Barack Obama during his campaign, both pick up on the theme that the international order is increasingly defined by transnational forces beyond the control of single states and that American exceptionalism is somehow outdated.<sup>9</sup> These themes probably reflect the foreign policy elite’s rejection of some of the logic that led to the Iraq war. Taken from an Asian perspective, however, they do not create a compelling vision of America’s role in the world for friends and allies who are forced to live with the reality of balance-of-power politics every day and who look to the United States to provide reassurance and leadership.

Asia is a maritime theater, and the U.S. Navy is poised at the cutting edge of each of most of that region’s challenges and opportunities. In the 2004–2005 tsunami relief operations the Navy demonstrated that American preeminence rests in part on our ability to provide “public goods” but also that rising powers like Japan, India, and Australia could win influence and respect for doing the same in times of crisis. The 2007 MALABAR exercise series in the Bay of Bengal (involving naval forces from India, the United States, Japan, Australia, and Singapore) sent a signal that the major maritime democracies had the capacity to work together to maintain open sea-lanes of communication and welcomed others willing and able to do the same. Through the Proliferation Security Initiative, the U.S. Navy helped to create a new regional and international norm with respect to interdiction of transfers by dangerous states of materials related to weapons of mass destruction. The successful missile defense tests off of Hawaii in December 2007 demonstrated that the United States and Japan are working toward increasing interoperability and virtual jointness in the face of new threats. The list could go on for pages, but in each instance the Navy has reinforced the American national objectives of reassurance, dissuasion, and deterrence in the region.

The Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard October 2007 strategy document *A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower* captures all of these dimensions of Asian security, from managing the global commons to deterring the use of force by potential adversaries.<sup>10</sup> Importantly, the document highlights Asia as

one of two key theaters for U.S. maritime power. That should have been a highly reassuring signal to our Asian allies. Yet I found surprising anxiety expressed in private about the new maritime strategy among strategic thinkers in Japan, Australia, and India. Where I shared other American experts' views that the new strategy offered a healthy mix of cooperation on transnational challenges together with attention to traditional balance-of-power concerns, many of my interlocutors in maritime Asia thought they saw too much of a focus on cooperative engagement and not enough on defending their respective nations and maintaining a favorable balance of power. I suspect that this says less about the maritime strategy itself than about the larger context of American strategic discourse on Asia that some of our friends think they hear. We need to be certain that the search for new strategic "vision" does not blur the national security realities right before our eyes.

American strategic thinking has flirted with new security paradigms before. After the First World War, the prevailing strategic view was that alliances and balance-of-power logic were fundamentally dangerous and that new multilateral agreements, such as the Washington and London naval treaties, would better help to preserve the peace in Asia. That proved to be a fallacy, as Japan re-armed and drifted unchecked toward aggressive expansion.

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*It is difficult to discern a clear consensus on strategy for managing order in East Asia.*

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Postwar American strategy in Asia focused solidly on alliance relations and balance of power, while reinforcing the peace through open markets and economic development. After the Cold War the Clinton administration came into office with a new paradigm that emphasized national economic security and devalued alliances and traditional balance-of-power logic. But by 1995 the region was questioning the staying power of American strategic leadership in Asia, as Chinese power grew and the Pentagon led a course correction with the "Nye Initiative" and the April 1996 joint security declaration between President Clinton and Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto that expanded defense cooperation with Japan.

New administrations tend to import big strategic ideas that collide with reality before very long. It is not clear how much influence the focus on megathreats and the growing resistance to balance-of-power logic will have on a president-elect who has already demonstrated a hardheaded pragmatism and will inherit two wars and a major financial crisis. Whatever the evolution in strategic thinking about Asia, the broader implications of this debate for the Navy are significant. There is plenty to commend the new maritime strategy to senior officials focused on megathreats, coalition building, and global governance. But do those missions

require a surface combatant fleet as large as we now have in the Pacific? Also, if the danger of a security dilemma with China is deemed equal to or greater than the threat posed by the PLA's growing anticarrier capabilities, how far should the U.S. Navy go in terms of deploying new assets, strengthening interoperability with Japan, or updating planning for Taiwan contingencies in ways that might cause a reaction in Beijing? Similarly, if remaining questions about arms sales to Taiwan and Japan (for example, Taiwan's request for F-16s or Japan's interest in F-22s) are viewed as too provocative, how else will we redress the growing delta between our allies and the PLA capabilities? Set against these strategic questions is the obvious backdrop of the financial crisis and growing budgetary requirements for the Army in the Central Command theater.

The Navy may face a difficult "branding" issue in the years ahead. The new maritime strategy encompasses all of the tools a new president would want to have in order to face the complex array of challenges in Asia, from the megathreats to traditional power competition. But depending on where the larger strategic debate goes, and given coming resource constraints, the Navy may be forced into the position of having to trumpet the "dissuade, deter, defeat" part of its mission in the Pacific in order to ensure that those capabilities are not devalued. That may be uncomfortable for a service that also sees itself, rightly, as the leading edge of military diplomacy in the region. But as an Asia strategist taking the long view of U.S. interests in the region, I for one hope that the Navy does not shy away from an effort to keep policy makers focused on the underlying strategic dynamics in this vital region.

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*Upon his retirement from the U.S. Marine Corps in 2003, General Fulford became director of the Africa Center for Strategic Studies, serving until 2006. He has been a National Security Council envoy to the Great Lakes Region and helped negotiate the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement in Sudan. He is currently a trustee with the Institute for Defense Analyses, focusing on African security issues.*

*General Fulford received his commission in June 1966, following graduation from the U.S. Naval Academy; he has also earned a master of science degree from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (1973) and is a graduate of the Industrial College of the Armed Forces. He was a platoon and company commander in Vietnam, 1966–68. After service in a variety of other Fleet Marine Force assignments, he was Commanding Officer, 7th Marines (1989–91); Commanding Officer, Task Force RIPPER during Operations DESERT SHIELD and DESERT STORM; Commanding General, 4th Marine Expeditionary Brigade (1991–92); Commanding General, III Marine Expeditionary Force (1994–95); Commanding General, I Marine Expeditionary Force (1996–98); Commander, U.S. Marine Corps Forces Pacific/Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific/Commander, U.S. Marine Corps Bases, Pacific (1998–99); and Deputy Commander in Chief, U.S. European Command, from 2000 until 2002.*

# **THINKING THROUGH U.S. STRATEGIC OPTIONS FOR AFRICA**

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*General Carlton W. Fulford, Jr., U.S. Marine Corps (Retired)*

**F**or the past decade, much has been debated and written about U.S. security interests in Africa. The George W. Bush administration has demonstrated a heightened awareness of Africa's importance to American geopolitical and economic interests as well as sensitivity to the continent's humanitarian challenges. The 2006 U.S. National Security Strategy identifies Africa as "a high priority" and "recognizes that our security depends upon partnering with Africans to strengthen fragile and failing states and bring ungoverned areas under the control of effective democracies."<sup>1</sup> To this end, the Bush administration has significantly increased aid, developmental assistance, military assistance, and other economic investments over any previous administration.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, it has taken the important step of creating a unified combatant command for Africa, which "will strengthen our security cooperation with Africa and help to create new opportunities to bolster the capabilities of our partners in Africa and help bring peace and security to the people of Africa and promote our common goals of development, health, education, democracy, and economic growth in Africa."<sup>3</sup>

Africa Command, or AFRICOM, is a sensible and innovative mechanism for addressing U.S. security relationships with African nations and institutions. It reached full operational capability in October 2008 and will demonstrate sincere U.S. intentions for support to Africans while raising American awareness and understanding of both the security and humanitarian challenges on the African continent. AFRICOM will also help American policy makers understand the importance of the strategic relationship with Africa and move us from an era of

crisis-response relationships to a more mature partnership in order to foster stronger relationships on the continent and a more stable, secure environment for African citizens.

To date, however, the United States has neither publicly defined its own strategic goals and objectives with regard to Africa nor effectively coordinated its actions across various departments and agencies of the U.S. government. This has led to suspicion on the African continent as well as uncertainty among other U.S. allies about Washington's true intent. The purpose of this article is to present a framework for such a strategy—a “white paper on Africa”—and encourage the next administration to form promptly a task force to define a U.S. strategy. This strategy should lead to coordinated interagency actions and to engagement and actions with other supportive governments, as well as representatives of responsible nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and civil-society groups in the United States and in Africa.

### A VISION FOR AFRICA

The first step is to establish a long-term vision for Africa in which its citizens' economic and human security needs are addressed and the strategic interests of the United States are protected. Formulating such a vision requires a more granular understanding of Africa and its constituent nations and people than the United States has customarily brought to bear on policy. This vision must be couched in reality and must be achievable within a definable time frame. I offer the following as a straw man—fully cognizant that before it is accepted as valid this vision must be discussed and coordinated with a wide audience: within our government, with Africans, and with other nations and institutions.

*Africa is a continent made up of stable, well-governed nations, committed to peaceful coexistence and international order, contributing to the global economy, and rewarding its citizens with freedom, security, and prosperity.*

When discussing Africa—if not the entire continent, certainly the sub-Saharan region—people often speak as if Africa were a single nation. In fact, Africa comprises fifty-three unique and different nations (fifty-four, if you include Western Sahara) and a population approaching a billion people—a sixth of the world's total. Some nations are democratic, some autocratic, and many are somewhere in between. Some are well governed, by leaders who want what is best for their citizens and have visions for the future. Some are governed poorly, by leaders who seemingly are interested only in preserving their own power bases or further enriching themselves. Poverty is rampant in many of the countries, yet some are blessed with abundant natural resources that could be developed; these countries, given the required investment in technology and value-adding industrial assets, could be transformed into modern, wealthy states. Other nations are

without these natural resources and also suffer from lack of water, fertile soil, temperate climate, or other means of sustaining their citizens. Corruption is a major factor in many African nations. Some of the world's most devout Christians and Muslims can be found throughout the continent, and with just about equal representation. In Africa one finds Nobel laureates, esteemed poets, and educators. One also finds vast numbers of the uneducated, unemployed, impoverished, and hopeless.

Africa is a very diverse landscape that does not respond to a unitary, one-size-fits-all solution. Africa also has a long history of being exploited, a factor that contributes greatly to suspicions that exist today. This history must be understood and appreciated as U.S. strategy is developed. Europe, Asia, and the United States have all seen Africa as a source of labor and natural resources and generally have taken what they wanted. No one can go back and rewrite history or make right all the wrongs of centuries, but we can be sensitive to this history as we forge our way ahead.

Finally, and significantly, Africans are not anti-American. It is true that they are suspicious of American intentions, a bit envious of what they see as disproportionate American wealth, and that they see Americans as sometimes arrogant and overbearing, but they like America and the ideals it advocates. The U.S. strategy should understand and build on this fact.

## STRATEGIC COMPONENTS

I propose that the U.S. strategy focus on governance, security, and economic opportunity. If the nations of Africa are to succeed in this age of globalization, they must have all three of these strategic components. Failure of any of the three will cause the other components to fail and ultimately thrust the affected country into chaos and turmoil. Furthermore, to be successful, America's strategic relationship with Africa cannot rely on military, diplomatic, commercial, or humanitarian relationships alone. Only by coordinating actions across a broad engagement front can the United States effectively support Africa in building a civil society and attaining a better quality of life for its citizens while achieving the vision I am proposing.

### *Governance*

Governance is fundamental to building a stable nation but has often been overlooked in planning efforts to develop strategic relationships with countries in Africa. The challenge of putting in place an effective, accountable government is formidable. The United States and other nations tend to accept what is in place and are reluctant to attempt to alter the internal relationships between the people of a nation and the government that represents them. Consequently, it often

appears the United States is more concerned with *regime* security than *national* security.<sup>4</sup> A few decades ago, there were divisive political debates over U.S. foreign policy emphasis on human rights within the countries with whom we interacted. During the Cold War, when ideological alignments were paramount, the prevailing view was that the United States put itself at a strategic or economic disadvantage by focusing on the “internal affairs” of a nation. Emphasis on good governance in the twenty-first century could be viewed as an evolutionary manifestation of human rights. Today, an increasing number of key leaders on both sides agree that governance is a key component of stability and that supporting nations have the moral justification to concern themselves with this component.

Dictating what kind of government a nation chooses and publicly assessing how well that government executes its responsibilities can, if carried to extremes, become symbols of arrogance and barriers to productive support. That said, the United States should endeavor to apply baseline standards to African nations—standards reflecting American values as well as those of any nation with whom the United States elects to build partnerships. To take an extreme example, the actions of the government of Sudan with respect to its citizens in Darfur are governance practices that the international community should refuse to accept. The same goes, with only slightly less force, for Robert Mugabe in Zimbabwe. There are other signs of poor governance on the African continent that the U.S. and other governments should refuse to recognize as acceptable.

More broadly, the United States can help build more effective governance by setting standards higher than it has in the past—against corruption, fraudulent elections, human rights abuses, and human trafficking. The United States should not condone such abuses in Africa any more than it would in any other part of the world. Rather, American leaders should work with responsible African leadership to define acceptable universal standards of governance to ensure that the cultures and identities of African citizens are preserved. These standards should be applied consistently and comprehensively in our relations with each country, providing support and assistance only to those governments meeting the standards. In those countries failing to meet the standards, the United States should seek ways to provide humanitarian support and hope through nongovernmental and responsible civil organizations, while exposing and condemning poorly performing African governments. This will require discipline within the U.S. interagency across economic, commercial, diplomatic, and security relationships. Once the United States demonstrates intolerance of poor governance over the spectrum of these activities, governments will change and conditions will be set for progress in security and economic opportunity.

The Millennium Challenge Corporation takes a step in the right direction by tying financial loans and grants to performance in seventeen governance

categories. These indicators focus on investments in education and health, control of corruption, respect for civil liberties and the rule of law, and commitment to policies that promote political and economic freedom.<sup>5</sup> These indicators should be expanded and consistently applied in our relationships with African nations. The United States is committed to democracy as the best form of government. Most African countries proclaim a public adherence to democracy, but their commitment to democracy in Africa is likely to remain, for the foreseeable future, a “mile wide and an inch thick.”<sup>6</sup> Accordingly, the focus here should not be on telling Africans what kind of government they must have but on how well or how poorly an existing government is carrying out its responsibilities to its citizens. Countries that are moving toward or consolidating democracy are making significant gains: multiparty elections are becoming institutionalized, and the activities of their parliaments, courts, and other institutions of government are improving. African nations that meet the standards should be encouraged and supported. Those that do not meet the standards should suffer consequences.

The World Bank measures and ranks the actions of 212 nations in six dimensions of governance, and the data it collects allow officials to compare trends by country over the past decade. The metrics are increasingly comprehensive and use data derived by multiple sources across a wide spectrum of academic, private, and nongovernmental organizations.<sup>7</sup>

Unfortunately, eight African countries appear in the lowest tenth percentile, while almost all the remaining nations are in the lower fiftieth percentile. These findings demonstrate the seriousness of the problem of poor governance and weak institutions on the African continent. That said, Botswana and Namibia rank among the world’s leaders in the dimension of political stability, South Africa ranks in the top twenty-fifth percentile in government effectiveness, and Botswana is in the top twenty-fifth percentile in control of corruption.<sup>8</sup> These performances should be held out as examples and models of what can be accomplished. Notably, no African nation ranks in the top twenty-fifth percentile in the rule of law, and thirteen of the bottom twenty nations in this category are African.<sup>9</sup>

Trends also provide insights. The evolution of governance standards in Côte d’Ivoire and Zimbabwe—both of which were once among Africa’s best-governed nations—have shown the most sharply negative trends in governance over the past decade. On the positive side, South Africa, Algeria, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Ghana, Niger, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo are among the ten countries showing the greatest improvement over this same period, though some of these countries started at very low levels.<sup>10</sup> These trends demonstrate the profound impact that political leadership can have in both directions. At the

same time, the distinctions among African countries caution us not to view the continent simplistically as a “hopeless” region (as the *Economist*’s May 2000 cover put it). Different countries face different problems and present different opportunities, relating to size, natural resource endowment, location, and past political record. This calls for greater differentiation and policy nuance on the part of the United States.

African nations require focused internal actions to improve governance as well as international encouragement and support. Improvement will establish the conditions necessary to achieve the vision. Failure, however, will lead to further disenfranchisement, vulnerability to extremist ideology, and, ultimately, violent conflict.

Inconsistent application of international governance standards on the part of the United States and other nations for economic or security reasons may provide short-term tactical advantages but will inevitably create strategic setbacks. The recent unrest in Kenya, a close and traditional U.S. partner in East Africa, highlights this fact. Kenya’s governance factors have been trending negatively for some time; for example, Kenya recently overtook Nigeria as one of the most corrupt nations in the world, as measured by Transparency International.<sup>11</sup> Kenya’s December 2007 presidential election was marred by fraud, intimidation, and political abuse; observers unanimously labeled it as deeply flawed. Yet the United States officially congratulated President Mwai Kabiki within a day of his claim of victory, even before Kenyan election officials announced results. This and similar actions from the international community probably did not trigger the violent reaction that led to the deaths of over a thousand Kenyans, but it did reinforce arguments by the opposition faction that the “system” was stacked against it and that only violence would vindicate its position. Kenya’s internal stability and the Kenya-U.S. bilateral relationship would have been much better served had the United States withheld its approval and supported a review of fraud allegations by Kenyan election authorities, with African Union and other international oversight.

Generally speaking, most African governments need to show serious improvement in how they provide for the welfare of their citizens at the most basic level. Responsible African leaders have formally recognized the importance of good governance. When the African Union (which succeeded the moribund Organization of African Unity) and the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) were established earlier this decade, both prescribed a peer-review process. The idea is for nations to have their governments evaluated by knowledgeable and reasonably impartial Africans, who would expose weaknesses and highlight strengths. The United States should formulate, in conjunction with the African Union and respected African leaders, universal standards of

governance and apply these standards consistently across the breadth of its activity with each nation. Thanks to NEPAD, these standards need not be imposed in a heavy-handed way that might feed African fears of neocolonialism. Rather than stitching the standards from whole cloth, the United States should support and help refine and energize NEPAD's peer-review process. This process was institutionalized specifically to temper international cynicism and build support for African initiatives, and several nations have completed it. Unfortunately, results have not been made public; the peer-review process has been slow to achieve its intended result. With American backing and technical assistance, the African Union should develop a schedule for all its member nations to undergo the peer review at least once every five years and hold its members accountable for taking corrective action.

### *Security*

Security—like the other aspects of any strategy toward Africa—is both complex and multifaceted. African countries have been beset by political conflict and instability over the last fifty years of independence, causing human suffering on a massive scale and retarding economic, social, and political development.<sup>12</sup> Success in this realm is important, in that good governance and economic opportunity have no chance without a reasonably safe and stable environment. Yet excessive emphasis on security consumes valuable resources and opens the door to abuse by illiberal regimes and rogue elements. Many Africans, after many years of violent military takeovers, conflicts, and corruption, view their security forces with fear and suspicion. Others live in fear of armed militias that weak armies and police forces cannot keep at bay. The challenge for African states is to build professional security forces with limited resources while keeping them under civil control.<sup>13</sup> For this reason, assistance in building capability and capacity in security structures must be accompanied by efforts to provide professional education and training and to inculcate ethics consistent with high international standards and in harmony with the cultural ethos of the region.

My vision is of an Africa that is committed to peaceful coexistence and international order. To achieve these goals, Africans must work harder to get along with their neighbors; maintain awareness of activities within their borders, air-space, and maritime regions; develop collective capacity to respond to illegal or threatening activity; and provide local law and order forces that are respected, not feared.

Several strong trends point in the right direction. One of them is that interstate conflicts are declining. However, all too frequently militias, rebels, extremists, and criminals find sanctuary just across national boundaries and use this sanctuary to enable conflict, intimidation, or illegal activity. Borders—land,

maritime, and air—are vast and frequently unregulated. Although larger, better-equipped border control forces are needed, improved subregional cooperation growing out of greater trust and recognition of mutual interests with neighboring states is the single most important requirement.

Another positive trend is that coups are no longer casually tolerated by the African Union and the international community. Even when a despotic leader is overthrown, as in Mauritania in 2005, the clear message from Africans and from the international community has been that regime change by force will not be condoned and that recognition, support, and relationships would be suspended until a civil government is restored. Unfortunately, after a brief (two-year) period with a democratically elected leader, Mauritania again finds itself under military rule. The people of this troubled nation will suffer as the international community suspends relationships in disapproval. This policy is sound and should be continued, without exception. The corollary has also to be recognized: How should the United States react when a civilian “coup d’État”—an abrogation of the electoral process—happens, such as recently occurred in Kenya and, even more egregiously, in Zimbabwe?

Further, the Peace and Security Architecture of the African Union is conceptually sound, though slow in actualization. The Peace and Security Council as a major subordinate organ of the African Union works to develop programs and concepts across the continent. The Africa Stand-By Force, the Military Staff Committee, the Panel of the Wise, the Continental Early Warning System, and the Peace Fund are all sound, useful concepts for Africa. If these mechanisms were fully implemented, the security of the continent would vastly improve. Unfortunately, organizational incapacity, limited resources, and bureaucratic lethargy have rendered implementation slow and weak.

In many cases, such subregional economic aggregations as the Economic Community of West African States, the East African Community, and the Southern African Development Community have made decisions and moved forward absent guidance and support from the African Union. This is understandable and not all bad, but it will lead to problems down the way in matters of interoperability, logistics and sustainment, and balance of forces. U.S. strategy should strongly support the African Union and the regional economic community organizations that show promise. Diplomatic and developmental posture should be increased with these multilateral organizations, and AFRICOM should have a presence nearby to offer support, assistance, and advice when needed. This does not mean that bilateral relations should be forgone but that bilateral support and assistance should be congruent with the goals and aims of larger subregional and regional security plans. AFRICOM could be a very effective enabler of this approach.

On the bilateral level, nations should be encouraged and assisted in conducting comprehensive, cross-government reviews of security force requirements. Typically, African armies are too large, and police and judicial systems are weak and underresourced. Likewise, most nations' maritime and air forces are too small and too poorly equipped to serve their security needs. Logistics, maintenance, and sustainment capacities either do not exist or are far too small to meet requirements. AFRICOM could assist through training, mentoring, and negotiating affordable but effective contract-support efforts at the regional level. The U.S. Navy's Africa Partnership Station, which recently completed its inaugural tour in the Gulf of Guinea, represented a significant enhancement of some of these efforts.<sup>14</sup>

African nations should be strongly encouraged to conduct comprehensive and realistic security reviews to identify and evaluate security threats, highlight and understand the risks of various courses of action, commit resources pragmatically, and develop long-term capacity-building plans to structure their security forces to meet the needs of the twenty-first century. These plans should include agreements for regional cooperation where possible. Regional hubs for maritime operations, air and transportation capacity, and maintenance/logistical support are all feasible and would likely garner donor support while yielding operational efficiencies.

In their internal reviews, African nations should be urged to factor in their contributions to the regional standby brigades and to commit themselves to ensuring that their contributions—staff elements, infantry battalions, or engineer, medical, or transportation elements—are organized, trained, equipped, and prepared. Units assigned to the standby brigades should view this assignment as one of honor, and nations should be held accountable to assign forces that are ready and capable.

Finally, AFRICOM should be a conduit for the professional military education of security forces in Africa. Many African officers attend military education and training institutions in the United States, Europe, and China, and this should be continued and encouraged. Beyond that, the effectiveness of several war colleges and command and staff colleges on the continent could be greatly enhanced through partnerships with U.S. professional military education institutions. Sharing research, exchanging faculty and students, and establishing virtual connectivity are but a few ways in which this collaboration could materialize and yield substantial dividends. Professional military educational initiatives should stress links between the military, parliament, and civil society. Other high-priority topics would include budgeting and fiscal responsibility, democratic control, and professional ethics.

An important operational goal of this professional education would be to advocate professional noncommissioned officer corps and to encourage and support the efforts of African nations to build them. The manpower is present, but emphasis on training, empowering, holding accountable, and properly paying this all-important element of African security forces is notably lacking. AFRICOM and other allies can render much help in this area.

### *Economic Opportunity*

Economic opportunity equates to hope. Mankind can endure hardship and trepidation if there is hope for a better tomorrow for self and family. Too frequently in Africa extreme poverty, catastrophes (natural and man-made), and other factors combine to deny hope to citizens. Without hope, people become disenfranchised and bitter, easy prey for extremist ideology.

Economic opportunity across the continent is heavily influenced by the world's growing demands for African energy resources and other commodities. China's growing energy thirst and greater involvement in the economies of many African nations are particularly salient. China has brought the benefit of cheap and durable goods to African consumers as well as investment in infrastructure, health care, and education. China's policy of noninterference in the sovereign affairs of nations has provided de facto support for some of the world's worst despots and therefore poses an unacceptable strategic alternative to U.S. goals concerning governance standards and practices. China's trade with Africa increased dramatically, from \$11 billion in 2000 to \$56 billion in 2006, making it the continent's third-largest trade partner, behind the United States and France. Beijing's target for African trade in 2010 is \$100 billion. Over eight hundred Chinese state-owned enterprises are active on the continent, and Angola has become China's largest supplier of oil. Chinese firms have already invested more than \$6 billion in Africa in nine hundred projects, most heavily in the hydrocarbon sector. U.S. policy, then, must incorporate America's strategic interest in ensuring commercial and physical access to hydrocarbons. American policy should also recognize that while Africa's hope resides in the economic opportunity latent in its natural resources, especially oil, its potential for benefiting the African people at large has thus far been squandered. Reversing this trend calls for building both human capital and physical infrastructure.

Achieving the vision in this sphere will be neither quick nor easy, but it is attainable. On the human side, the focus must be on health care and education, in order to build a competitive labor force for the twenty-first century. It may take a generation or more, but ensuring that all children have access to schools is a mandatory first step. African nations must take the lead in promoting opportunities

for children to go to school; they must re-create a culture that emphasizes the importance of education for all children.

Public-private partnerships can help. I have been in schools on the continent that have no books, no paper or chairs, where dozens of eager children sit on the ground listening to a teacher as she writes on a slate board. If schools in the United States adopted sister schools in villages in Africa and donated books and supplies, the schools in Africa would benefit and the children, who are the future of Africa, would be durably grateful.

What is lacking on the part of the United States is not material, however, but bureaucratic attention and coordination. In 2002, for example, the Bush administration launched the Africa Education Initiative and committed itself to provide \$600 million over eight years to increase access to quality basic education. In 2007, the President's Expanded Education for the World's Poorest Children was announced, with an additional \$525 million over five years.<sup>15</sup> The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) recently introduced the Basic Education Initiative and asked the U.S. Congress to appropriate over \$600 million in fiscal year 2009 to support basic educational programs worldwide.<sup>16</sup> This initiative should continue and grow, and much more effective coordination should be put in place across U.S. government agencies working in Africa.

Likewise, through the Malaria Initiative and the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, the United States has done a great deal to improve health care in Africa. However, much remains to be done. Two-thirds of HIV/AIDS-infected persons worldwide live in Africa.<sup>17</sup> African statistics in birth mortality (the average life spans of both mothers and children are at the bottom of the world's averages) reflect the inadequate health care infrastructure across the continent. African children under five die at twice the rate of those in the developing world as a whole. The odds that a sub-Saharan African woman will die from complications of pregnancy and childbirth are one in sixteen, compared to one in 3,800 in the developed world.<sup>18</sup> Almost half the population does not have access to clean, safe drinking water, and two-thirds lack basic sewage and waste disposal systems.<sup>19</sup> This situation is exacerbated by the flight of trained health care workers seeking higher-paying jobs in Europe and the United States. The international community can and should increase efforts to help. Again, this is best led by NGOs and private organizations on a local level.

Food security is the next area that needs attention. Nature is not kind to vast areas of the continent; droughts and other natural disasters routinely threaten the food supply. Still, there are large swaths of Africa that could serve as fertile food baskets for the continent. Countries like Nigeria and Zimbabwe were once food exporters that now, for different reasons, must now rely on imports or food aid. Good internal agriculture programs and governmental incentives in these

countries can turn this situation around. In the 2006–2007 growing season, Malawi doubled its agricultural productivity through United Nations assistance with fertilizers and seeds.<sup>20</sup> The U.S. Department of Agriculture and USAID can assist many other countries with twenty-first-century agro-technology that can turn them into bountiful food producers.

Electricity is another critical dimension of infrastructure, one requiring administrative focus as well as resources. More modern and better-maintained hydroelectric plants along the Congo and Zambezi rivers could provide clean, efficient, low-cost energy for much of south and central Africa. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Tennessee Valley Authority, and other public-private ventures could facilitate such development with investment support from the World Bank, the African Development Bank, and the Millennium Challenge Corporation.

Transportation in Africa also needs serious help. Most of the road and rail networks on the continent were built to provide access from the interior to the ocean ports to carry extracted resources for shipment. Even now, China is repairing and modernizing a railroad from Zambia through Tanzania to support the extraction of copper from a mine China has purchased in Zambia. Both Zambia and Tanzania will benefit from this rail line, as will China. But more needs to be done within the continent to build and repair roads, railways, and navigable waterways that will encourage intercontinental trade and exchange as well as port and harbor improvements that will ease export operations. It would be in the strategic interest of the United States, as well as helpful to African partners, for Washington to play a leading role in developing these transportation networks.

If Africans are to realize value from their goods, they must be able to trade them with fewer hurdles and costs. The costs of interior transportation to major capitals can be five times higher than for shipping from African ports to markets in Europe, Asia, or North America. Part of this is due to low volumes, bad roads, and lack of competition. But corrupt and inefficient bureaucracy is also a major factor.

The United States could do Africa an enormous service and promote its own interests by acting as an agent for change of multilateral international trade rules on behalf of African governments. It has much to gain diplomatically, commercially, and strategically by doing so.

The United States should adopt a comprehensive strategy in its activities with African nations and institutions. The United States should engage international partners, challenging them to lead, follow, or get out of the way. Most importantly, the United States should work more closely with well disposed African

partners to improve their governance, security, and economic opportunity. It is the morally right thing to do; it demonstrates American intentions to maintain ethical balance; and it is in our own strategic interests. America can demonstrate its true greatness while helping worthy African citizens attain a better life.

A new administration with focused priorities, using all the tools of our nation, including a fully operational Africa Command, is positioned to accomplish the recommendations of this article and to help African nations attain the vision. In the words of that great corporate philosopher Nike—"Just do it!"

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# THE GLOBAL FLEET STATION

## A Powerful Tool for Preventing Conflict

*Kathi A. Sohn*

The October 2007 initial deployment of the Africa Partnership Station (APS) to the Gulf of Guinea and the coincident rollout of *A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower* signaled a strong American commitment to leveraging U.S. sea power to protect and sustain the global, interconnected maritime sphere. The APS is a Global Fleet Station (GFS) sea base designed to assist the Gulf of Guinea maritime community in developing better maritime governance for denying use of the sea to those who threaten regional and global security.

The Global Fleet Station, born out of a need for military shaping and stability operations without the trappings of war, is a proven concept for this mission in such areas as the Gulf of Guinea and the Caribbean basin. It also serves as a platform from which to deliver humanitarian assistance and disaster relief to nations within its area of operations. The GFS is more a concept than a “platform,” and its promise and flexibility arise from, respectively, its minimal military footprint ashore and the wide cross-section of professional resources that it hosts. The prevention of violence—still a challenge for the conflict-resolution profes-

sion and entirely new ground for the Defense Department—is one potential contribution, however, that the GFS has yet to realize fully.

The pilot Africa Partnership Station mission, which ended in May 2008, laid the foundation for conflict prevention by future deployments through the relationships it built with and between the peoples of the Gulf of Guinea region, by the goodwill it instilled through its humanitarian-action and disaster-relief

*Kathi A. Sohn is a civilian employee of the Department of Defense with a current assignment to the Pentagon in direct support of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. She graduated with highest distinction from the Naval War College in June 2008 and was awarded the McGinnis Family Award for Outstanding Performance in Distance Education. Sohn also has a master's degree in conflict analysis and resolution from George Mason University (2003). She can be contacted at katsohn@yahoo.com.*

efforts, and through its promotion of African maritime security. The U.S. Naval Forces Europe–Sixth Fleet staff has planned APS missions through 2012, with a scheduled 1 November 2008 deployment of the dock landing ship USS *Nashville* (LPD 13). By tapping worldwide conflict-prevention resources and improving coordination with international and regional nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), the Africa Partnership Station can effectively support the mission of the new U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) to enable African solutions to African problems. In this process, the APS can demonstrate how powerful a tool the Global Fleet Station can be for preventing violent conflict.

### THE MARITIME STRATEGY: A FOCUS ON OPPORTUNITIES

Al-Qa‘ida ushered in a new era of terrorism on September 11, 2001, amplifying the need to address the underlying causes and conditions that give rise to extremist behavior. Subsequently, American national security strategies focused on the denial of safe havens to reduce the pool of terrorist recruits. These strategies acknowledged that peaceful alternatives could be offered to the disenfranchised through the building of civil institutions and relationships. This has traditionally been the work of NGOs, but these organizations have been largely crippled during recent decades. Spread thin by post–Cold War conflicts, chronically underfunded due to international-donor fatigue, and subject to inconsistent support from local governments, NGOs cannot alone foster the positive environment prescribed in post-9/11 strategies.

National Security Presidential Directive (NSPD) 41, as updated through 2005, mandated better integration and synchronization of department-level strategies; a number of subsequent documents clarified matters of authority and responsibility.<sup>1</sup> Federal agencies reorganized to that end, and the military services aligned their efforts to eliminate “stovepiped” decision making and to increase communication and collaboration. The 2005 *National Strategy for Maritime Security* and its eight supporting plans established a comprehensive effort to promote global economic stability and protect legitimate activities while preventing hostile or illegal acts in the maritime domain.<sup>2</sup>

On 17 October 2007, at the International Seapower Symposium in Newport, Rhode Island, Admiral Gary Roughead, the newly named Chief of Naval Operations (CNO), unveiled the new joint maritime strategy, *A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower*, to representatives from ninety-eight countries.<sup>3</sup> This strategy translates the 2005 maritime strategic guidance into a collaborative effort by the U.S. maritime forces—the Navy, the Marine Corps, and the Coast Guard. It addresses the need for regionally concentrated, credible combat power and for globally distributed, mission-tailored maritime forces. It reflects a core requirement for maritime mobility, flexibility, and power, but it does not imply

that U.S. maritime forces alone are to do everything, everywhere, and all the time to prevent, deter, or victoriously end conflict. Instead, the strategy declares a strategic imperative to foster and sustain cooperative relationships with more international partners; however, it warns, “trust and cooperation cannot be surged.” The implication is a general need to work smarter, not harder, and so achieve more; former CNO Admiral Michael Mullen gave this idea specific form—a “thousand-ship navy,” in which membership “is purely voluntary and would have no legal or encumbering ties. It would be a free-form, self-organizing network of maritime partners—good neighbors interested in using the power of the sea to unite, rather than to divide. The barriers for entry are low. Respect for sovereignty is high.”<sup>4</sup>

The new strategy boldly places “Preventing wars is as important as winning wars” in a long-overdue framework of a collaborative, conflict-preventive maritime approach to global security. The strategy “focuses on *opportunities*—not threats; on *optimism*—not fear; and on *confidence*—not doubt.”

The U.S. maritime services can meet the strategic imperative to prevent or contain local disruptions before they impact the global system by planning each joint, combined, or interagency initiative in light of all potentially affected conflictual processes. The Global Fleet Station program provides an ideal opportunity.

## CONFLICT PREVENTION AND THE ROLE OF THE GLOBAL FLEET STATION

There is no consensus within the conflict-resolution community on the nature of conflict prevention. One major reason is that prevention involves action—and what action is required will depend on the shifting needs of a particular region at a particular time. Therefore, how conflict prevention is approached becomes more important than precisely what is done, where, or when. This critical conflict-prevention key is reflected in a 2006 study conducted by the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada to provide expert insights into current thinking about conflict prevention. Regarding normative gaps, the study concluded that “the foremost issues that Canada should address are those of constructive engagement and cooperation among nonstate, state, and intergovernmental actors.”<sup>5</sup>

Also key to successful conflict prevention is a greater understanding of the nature of conflict itself and the difficulties of its resolution. Conflict is the metaphorical elephant groped by blind men, each trying to describe the entire elephant based on his perception of a part he can touch. American civilian and military leaders need to examine the conflict “elephant” from a variety of perspectives. One of them is the perception of conflict as a process, a “moving

elephant,” the inherent nature of which might be completely misunderstood if not reassessed over time.

Viewing conflict as a process also allows prevention to be understood in terms of aftermath. In June 2005, members of the international aid community met in Paris to discuss lessons learned during the thirteen years of peace building following the appearance in 1992 of the groundbreaking *An Agenda for Peace*, by Boutros Boutros-Ghali, secretary-general of the United Nations. This document signaled a paradigm shift in the UN approach to conflict, acknowledging the “critically related concept of postconflict peacebuilding” as action to identify and support “structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict.”<sup>6</sup> Thereafter, experts expanded the conflict lexicon to describe nuances. For example, “conflict prevention” became “violent conflict prevention” because conflict is a natural, productive process that should be allowed to occur, as long as it proceeds in a nonviolent fashion. Another example is the contemporary differentiation between “positive peace” (the absence of the underlying causes and conditions for violent conflict) and “negative peace” (absence of violent conflict), a distinction useful for decisions regarding intervention.

Further, because the organizational perspectives of military services and civilian agencies and the emotional impact of real-time media on public opinion exacerbate the “fog of war” in periods of conflict, it is crucial that civilian agencies and military planners build working relationships during times of peace. The GFS represents a great opportunity to build civil-military communication and coordination practices that can be leveraged in any theater in the event of war. The need for cooperation between military and civilian entities during joint operations is not new, as evidenced by the 1996 joint publication *Interagency Coordination during Joint Operations*.<sup>7</sup> What is new since 9/11 is an increasing urgency for the Defense Department to engage in peacetime operations traditionally considered nonmilitary. It therefore becomes equally urgent to streamline interagency processes and move beyond cultural civil-military barriers.

The GFS concept arose from this urgency, as a way to conduct security cooperation and capacity-building operations without deploying traditional carrier and expeditionary strike groups. Taking advantage of existing status-of-forces agreements and memorandums of understanding, as well as funding from the International Military Education and Training program and other such sources, the GFS is now a self-sufficient regional headquarters that “serves as the model for coordination with local government agencies, international organizations, and non-governmental organizations.”<sup>8</sup>

*Naval Operations Concept 2006* describes the Global Fleet Station, illustrating its capacity to perform as a vital resource to combatant commanders:

Like all sea bases, the composition of a GFS depends on Combatant Commander requirements, the operating environment, and the mission. From its sea base, each GFS would serve as a self-contained headquarters for regional operations with the capacity to repair and service all ships, small craft, and aircraft assigned. Additionally, the GFS might provide classroom space, limited medical facilities, an information fusion center, and some combat service support capability. The GFS concept provides a leveraged, high-yield sea based option that achieves a persistent presence in support of national objectives.<sup>9</sup>

The operations concept also features the Global Fleet Station as “a future sea story,” highlighting the potential of the platform to build relationships and trust with the local populace of such depth that the security payoff transcends peace operations and ultimately contributes to counterterrorism.<sup>10</sup>

Just as the new maritime strategy defined the joint military nature of the Global Fleet Station, authority and guidance for interagency and international participation in the GFS can be found in the many follow-up documents to NSPD-41. For example, one of the eight supporting plans to the 2005 *National Strategy for Maritime Security* is the *International Outreach and Coordination Strategy*, implemented by the Secretary of State. This document calls for the State Department to coordinate closely with other departments and agencies to “enhance existing ties and forge new partnerships with other nations, international and regional organizations, and the private sector to improve global maritime security.”<sup>11</sup> A further presidential directive, NSPD-44, assigned the management of foreign interagency efforts concerning reconstruction and stabilization to the Secretary of State, in coordination with the Secretary of Defense, in an effort “to ensure harmonization with any planned or ongoing U.S. military operations across the spectrum of conflict.”<sup>12</sup>

The *2006 Quadrennial Defense Review Report* states:

Recognizing that stability, security and transition operations can be critical to the long war on terrorism, the Department [of Defense] issued guidance in 2005 to place stability operations on par with major combat operations within the Department. The directive calls for improving the Department’s ability to work with interagency partners, international organizations, non-governmental organizations and others to increase capacities to participate in complex operations abroad.<sup>13</sup>

This guidance to “place stability operations on par with major combat operations” sounds very similar to the new maritime strategy statement that “preventing wars is as important as winning wars.”

A Defense Department directive, *Military Support for Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction (SSTR) Operations*, states, “Many stability operations tasks are best performed by indigenous, foreign, or American civilian professionals. Nonetheless, U.S. military forces shall be prepared to perform all tasks necessary to establish or maintain order when civilians cannot do so. Successfully performing such tasks can help secure a lasting peace and facilitate the timely withdrawal of U.S. and foreign forces.”<sup>14</sup> In 2004, General Anthony Zinni stressed the need for improved civil-military cooperation in the interest of postconflict reconstruction. In language reminiscent of the directive, he declared, “The military is not the best answer for providing humanitarian support, but if there is a gap, the military will fill it.”<sup>15</sup> The Africa Partnership Station has proved the Global Fleet Station highly suitable for filling the humanitarian support gap and has demonstrated the focus on opportunities, optimism, and confidence called for by the new maritime strategy.

### THE PILOT APS MISSION AS PROOF OF THE GFS CONCEPT IN THE GULF OF GUINEA

U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) sponsored the first pilot Global Fleet Station mission from April to September 2007, using the high-speed vessel (HSV 2) *Swift*. During the course of visits to seven Caribbean and Central American nations its crew “conducted 39,890 hours of subject matter expert exchanges in such areas as leadership, small boat operations, port security and small unit tactics.”<sup>16</sup>

Two weeks before the issuance of *A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower*, the Sixth Fleet deployed two platforms—the *Swift* again and the USS *Fort McHenry* (LSD 43), a large amphibious ship—on a seven-month joint and combined (that is, multiservice and multinational) maritime APS mission.

Naval Forces Europe developed this Africa Partnership Station mission as part of efforts in West and Central Africa resulting from a pivotal 2006 conference in Cotonou, Benin. There, all eleven Gulf of Guinea nations had expressed their commitment to addressing maritime governance on local, national, and regional levels. They specifically resolved to “continue engagement with international maritime partners, including the African Union and African nations outside the Gulf of Guinea, the International Maritime Organization, the United Nations and its relevant agencies, bilateral partners and non-governmental agencies.”<sup>17</sup> Representatives from eight European navies were to join the three American maritime services in APS visits to Senegal, Liberia, Ghana, Cameroon, Gabon, São Tomé and Príncipe, Togo, and other African countries over the seven-month period. Numerous media reports underscored the many successful activities undertaken by the Africa Partnership Station, including all aspects of

maritime security training and awareness building, humanitarian work, and crisis response. U.S. agencies involved include the Department of State, the Department of Homeland Security, the Agency for International Development, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

In March 2008, the prepositioning ships of the Military Sealift Command's West Africa Training Cruise joined the Africa Partnership Station for a sea-basing and humanitarian-assistance-distribution exercise off Monrovia, Liberia. The 28 March 2008 edition of *Rhumb Lines*, a weekly Navy Office of Information e-mail circular for senior Navy leadership, reported the impact of such additional sea-base platforms as the Improved Navy Lighterage System, a redesigned floating-dock system originally used during World War II, in its first operational deployment. *Rhumb Lines* reported, "The ability to create a mobile platform at sea enables future execution of the Maritime Strategy, complements APS initiatives and has the potential to enhance future support in the African region."<sup>18</sup> One report on an early February 2008 visit by APS to Cameroon to assist with the relief of refugees escaping to the northern part of that country from civil conflict in Chad illustrates the multifaceted relationship-building nature of the APS mission: "In addition to providing relief assistance during the visit, Sailors from Swift will conduct a community relations project, meet with local officials, play soccer with the Cameroon Navy, and support a diplomatic reception aboard the ship."<sup>19</sup>

The diplomatic role of each member of the APS crew cannot be underestimated, and continuing cultural education is vital. A July 2007 GFS concept paper referred to building cultural awareness as a critical component of GFS shaping and stability operations, tying in the Defense Department-mandated military Foreign Area Officer program as further expanding "the Navy's enablers and capability to engage more effectively around the world in a culturally informed and meaningful manner."<sup>20</sup> A November 2007 report entitled "Cultural Awareness Personifies Africa Partnership Station Mission" highlights the importance of cultural training for the APS crew, quoting a senior Marine Corps Africa analyst: "Our steaming here is a means to an end. A lot of people on the ship, regardless of where they work, will be going ashore in terms of either liberty or community relations events."<sup>21</sup>

Beyond the press reporting about diplomatic events and the training of mission personnel on African culture, there is an invaluable opportunity to capture the experiences and insights of the men and women on board the Africa Partnership Station, so quickly lost by rotation. The potential for building cross-cultural understanding spans the multiple dimensions of day-to-day joint, combined, interagency, and foreign interactions. Between formal and informal liaison activity, input gained during a time of peaceful interaction can be

used to inform operations during a time of crisis. To that end, the AFRICOM commander, General William E. “Kip” Ward, emphasized during an interview in October 2007 that the APS initiative and his new command would strive “as a whole” to help African countries build capacity. He elaborated on how the new APS initiative “provides a good example of what the newly established Africa Command is all about as it relates to helping our partner nations on the continent of Africa build their capacity to better govern their spaces (and) to have more effect in providing for the security of their people.”<sup>22</sup> The Sixth Fleet commander, Vice Admiral Sandy Winnefeld, referred to the Africa Partnership Station as “a Noah’s Ark of tremendous capability.”<sup>23</sup>

When the APS returned in May 2008 from its seven-month deployment to the Gulf of Guinea, the Center for Naval Analyses, European Command, and Naval Expeditionary Combat Command (in Norfolk, Virginia) completed assessments begun during the mission of its effectiveness and perceptions of it. These reports informed the decision to continue the APS program through 2012. As General Ward implied, the Africa Partnership Station is an integral part of the new AFRICOM and U.S. policy in the African region.

### AN APS AT SEA PROMOTING AFRICOM SUCCESS ON THE CONTINENT

On 7 February 2007, President George W. Bush directed the establishment of AFRICOM to “strengthen our security cooperation with Africa and help create new opportunities to bolster the capabilities of our partners in Africa.”<sup>24</sup> Like the new maritime strategy and the GFS project, AFRICOM reflects how senior American policy makers are digging in for “the long war” against terror. The 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review proposed developing “the authorities and resources to build partnership capacity, achieve unity of effort, and adopt indirect approaches to act with and through others to defeat common enemies—shifting from conducting activities ourselves to enabling partners to do more for themselves.”<sup>25</sup> AFRICOM, which was “stood up” on 1 October 2008, is such an “authority”—as the APS is a “resource” for building partnership capacity in the African region.

Previously, responsibility for operations on the African continent was divided among U.S. European Command, Central Command, and Pacific Command. Channeling all American security initiatives in the African region through one unified command should help streamline the communication and coordination processes critical to the novel approach of enabling “African solutions to African challenges.” General Ward stated in early 2008 to delegates of the fifteen member nations of the Economic Community of West African States that U.S. assistance will be “not as we think or what we direct, but what comes to us

in the way of requests, and again, in keeping with our stated U.S. foreign policy objectives.”<sup>26</sup>

Reaction to the plans for AFRICOM has been as mixed as were responses to the new maritime strategy.<sup>27</sup> Robert G. Berschinski addresses the main concerns in his *AFRICOM’s Dilemma: The “Global War on Terrorism,” “Capacity Building,” Humanitarianism, and the Future of U.S. Security Policy in Africa*. The new command’s critics “allege that the Command demonstrates a self-serving American policy focused on fighting terrorism, securing Africa’s burgeoning energy stocks, and countering Chinese influence.”<sup>28</sup> Berschinski points out that post-9/11 American “kinetic” operations in the trans-Saharan and Horn of Africa regions have not produced lasting solutions while they have served to alienate segments of the African population. Further, policies of “aggregation” regarding Africa have reflected an ignorance of the true nature of the regional insurgent threat, amalgamating the regional insurgent threat into a “frightening, but artificially monolithic whole.”<sup>29</sup>

AFRICOM, in conjunction with the Africa Partnership Station, has the unique opportunity to adopt a new security paradigm for an integrated approach to violent-conflict prevention, an approach that will lessen the need for quick military reaction in crisis intervention. A major factor will be the chance to leverage the indigenous wisdom and expertise of the African people, not force Western solutions on their problems. Instead of the conventional plan to put “boots on the ground,” cooperative security and diplomatic events can take place on the APS with “minimal footprint ashore.”

African leadership perceptions regarding the true intention of AFRICOM will be as important to the command’s success as are the leaderships’ own perspectives of regional problems. It is particularly vital that the United States resist the urge to build military bases on the African continent to host AFRICOM initiatives. The United States can assuage fears that the true intention of the new command is to militarize the region by decentralizing the command, continuing to use the Africa Partnership Station, and making an unwavering commitment to addressing the root causes of conflict.

## AN INTEGRATED APS APPROACH TO VIOLENT-CONFLICT PREVENTION

On the African continent, AFRICOM has begun its work amid conditions of ongoing violent conflict processes and negative peace. It will be especially important for the command to fend off criticism for not producing quick results by educating observers—using precise conflict terminology—regarding the length of time required to build trust and institutions. It will also be necessary for all concerned to understand that conflict is a cycle, characterized by varying

degrees of intensity, from nonviolent manifestations of underlying structural conflict to full-scale bloodshed. Further, it will need to be stressed that AFRICOM has chosen an approach reflective of the appropriate role for external actors in an advanced stage of postconflict (or nonviolent conflict) intervention—a critical time, full of opportunity to promote positive peace and prevent violent conflict.

The classical stages of postconflict intervention include, first, a *stabilization* stage, during which external actors manage the society.<sup>30</sup> The next, or *transition*, phase can last for one to three years while an interim government is established and humanitarian relief shifts to developmental projects. During this time, internal and external actors increasingly work together to bring about the disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration necessary for stabilization. The final, *consolidation*, phase lasts between four and ten years, during which security sector reforms occur, internal actors take the lead, and external actors assume a role of capacity building and support.

In this schema, the current engagement of the APS and the future role of AFRICOM relate to consolidation—the longest and, because of its role in preventing violence, most critical stage of peace building. This is also the most difficult stage to manage; the characteristic ineffectiveness of postconflict programs has been historically attributed to “the lack of attention to the point of view of local populations, and to the disjointed nature of international response and lack of coherence between different actors.”<sup>31</sup> The proceedings of the June 2005 Paris conference mentioned above highlighted the importance of integrated preventive measures in postconflict strategies, noting that “as a large percentage of countries coming out of crises are at risk for falling back into the conflict trap, there is a need to see the post-conflict stage as also a conflict prevention stage.”<sup>32</sup>

These suggested integrated preventive measures could be a natural function of the APS integrated operation. In 2005, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Richard Myers, U.S. Air Force, suggested that “integrated operations” is a more accurate, inclusive term than “interagency” or “combined” for contemporary collaborative efforts: “Many services, Federal agencies, allies and their governmental agencies, corporations, and nongovernmental organizations must cooperate to meet the full spectrum of military operations, from peacekeeping to battle to the transition to lasting peace.”<sup>33</sup>

In addition to its potential conflict-resolution role in the Gulf of Guinea, the APS is concurrently serving that of violent-conflict prevention in the general African region. It is important for military planners to acknowledge, in their effort to place all security-related initiatives within the context of the conflict spectrum, that the APS maritime security mission has this dual function. In his discussion paper “Security Sector Reform, Conflict Prevention and Regional

Perspectives,” Owen Greene acknowledges, “It is clear that [security-sector reforms] can contribute in many ways to conflict prevention and reduction. However, many efforts to reform the security sector are not primarily concerned with conflict prevention or reduction, and so their contribution to these goals may be more or less direct.”<sup>34</sup>

Of additional significance is the opportunity for AFRICOM to learn during the conduct by APS of its integrated maritime security mission. Lessons learned in this floating laboratory for collaborative efforts—whether about successes or failures—are perishable but can greatly contribute to synchronizing missions. This can be a particular challenge, considering the additional complexity created by giving the lead role to African leadership. Failure to plan, implement, and evaluate integrated processes properly could degrade progress toward AFRICOM’s overall objectives as well as diminish Africa’s confidence in the command.

The 2005 Paris conference participants agreed that integration needs to occur during all the stages of intervention, from planning to evaluation. This means that regular reporting and widespread information sharing are crucial, because each perspective is a piece of the puzzle. These stages are not necessarily linear, and the processes of one could inform another. For example, aid workers implementing a humanitarian project could collect valuable qualitative metrics on progress made toward establishing a positive peace. AFRICOM could facilitate the reporting of such insights and maintain a centralized database for the African region.

In a December 2007 technical report entitled *A Systems Engineering Approach for Global Fleet Station Alternatives in the Gulf of Guinea*, twelve Naval Postgraduate School student officers evaluated interagency and NGO coordination as a facet of Global Fleet Station that was not in itself a mission but deserved attention to equal that given “shaping” operations and humanitarian or disaster-relief missions.<sup>35</sup> They acknowledged that “outside” agencies “provide to an overall campaign for regional stability, [including] a historical perspective on lessons learned out of the changing nature of war and how to prevent it.”<sup>36</sup>

The following recommendations would maximize the opportunities represented by the Global Fleet Station concept for implementing the principles of *A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower* and for leveraging the knowledge, skills, and experiences of GFS crewmembers.

*Widen the Global Fleet Station program.* Lessons learned from the APS missions and SOUTHCOM’s past and current Navy Diver Global Fleet Station can illustrate the adaptability of the GFS to the requirements of combatant commanders. GFS deployments to the Central and Pacific theaters should be

considered, taking care to maintain international perception of the platform as noncombatant.

Widened use of the Global Fleet Station concomitant with an increased use of the sea for staging combatant forces would risk contaminating the noncombatant image of the GFS. Nonetheless, sea basing as an alternative for staging combatant forces needs to be seriously considered. Minimizing the U.S. military footprint ashore has support from analysts who see grave consequences in building military bases on foreign soil. For example, University of Chicago professor Robert Pape strongly believes that suicide terrorism has found encouragement in the coerced withdrawal of American and allied forces from territories. He suggests that the United States use a strategy of “offshore balancing” as an alternative to putting bases where violent acts are likely to be perpetrated to force them to leave.<sup>37</sup>

*Keep the Africa Partnership Station afloat as a partner to AFRICOM in integrated violent-conflict prevention.* APS deployments to the African region should continue, with the least amount of time possible between deployments. The Global Fleet Station featured in the 2006 *Naval Operations Concept*, “Future Sea Story,” was on station for two years building partnership and trust. The Africa Partnership Station sustains symbolic and practical relevance for Navy planners with regard to American policy in Africa. A persistent presence of the APS can assist AFRICOM in developing an end-to-end integrated approach to violent-conflict prevention, which will incorporate the unique contributions of all agencies, services, and organizations involved in promoting security in the African region.

*Tap worldwide conflict-prevention resources for GFS missions.* Peace-building and conflict-prevention resources on board the GFS and among its partners on the continent are rich, but even so, they could be greatly enhanced by tapping worldwide academics and practitioners. AFRICOM databasing of aid worker evaluations and a myriad of other metrics related to conflict prevention could be replicated in other theaters to share lessons learned and track global trends.

*Apply lessons learned from GFS in peacetime to integrated operations in war.* During times of war, conflict is continually reassessed and courses of action adjusted. A clear picture of the desired end-state and war-termination indicators can guide conflict and postconflict planning. All courses of action during the violent phase of the conflict should help bring about the desired end state, and all postconflict planning should assume conditions that end the war. American military planners can apply lessons learned from streamlined, integrated operations during Global Fleet Station violent-conflict-prevention missions to develop better military exit strategies from war in any theater of operations.

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# THE U.S. NAVY

## Into Africa

*Jonathan Stevenson*

**A**lthough Africa has long been a low strategic priority for the United States, Washington now has a sharp and pronounced strategic interest in protecting access to rich reserves of sub-Saharan oil and gas, mainly in the vicinity of the Gulf of Guinea, as part of its drive to reduce dependence on Middle East suppliers. By 2010, Africa's share of U.S. oil imports could rise to 20 percent, and China has begun to engage the United States in a geopolitical contest for hydrocarbons and other economic and political benefits in sub-Saharan Africa. There are also roughly 400 million Muslims in Africa, and Muslim radicalism has been on the rise in countries like Nigeria and Somalia, the latter of which has become a hot training destination for aspiring jihadists. Weak and failed states are vulnerable to co-optation by bad actors, and there are more of them—the two of greatest concern being Islamist-governed Sudan and anarchic Somalia—in sub-Saharan Africa than anywhere else. Some of Africa's problems are of interest to the United States as a matter of philosophical values, as opposed to immediate strategic interests. Poverty and disease (HIV/AIDS in particular) pervade the continent, and many of Africa's fifty-three nations are politically unstable or economically dysfunctional or are run by malign regimes. Zimbabwe, for example, is afflicted by all of these scourges.

Accordingly, the Department of Defense conceived Africa Command, or

AFRICOM, to help Africans help themselves and to frame Africa, for purposes of formulating and implementing American foreign policy, as an end in itself rather than the geopolitical construct that it was during the Cold War. The idea is for the U.S. military to

*Jonathan Stevenson is a professor of strategic studies at the U.S. Naval War College. He was embarked upon the USS Fort McHenry (LSD 43) in the Gulf of Guinea, part of the Africa Partnership Station, in April 2008.*

stress the prevention of and, contingently, preparation for insecurity through building African military capacity rather than to default to mere crisis management. AFRICOM would become a key component in an interagency effort to use especially “nonkinetic” military resources (e.g., command, control, and communication assets; engineering capabilities; and public health expertise) to provide more readily benefits related to humanitarian assistance and development, as well as improvements in defense infrastructure, and to support (not control) African leadership.<sup>1</sup> Announcing AFRICOM’s creation in February 2007, a Pentagon spokesman said that many of its missions would in fact be nonkinetic ones, such as humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, and that the command would be set up mainly for preventing war and establishing stability.<sup>2</sup>

Yet Africans have not easily bought into Africa Command. Washington’s public-relations rollout of AFRICOM in early and mid-2007 came at an inopportune time, when the security situation in Iraq was deteriorating and U.S. forward military activity was perceived, at worst, as imperialistic and recklessly inept or, at best, as focused exclusively on counterterrorism and devoid of any broader effort to help host nations. Amplifying this problem, the official line on AFRICOM was scattershot. The Defense Department first bruited the possibility of new American military bases in Africa, then blandly cast the new command as simply a bureaucratic reorganization that rationalized responsibility for the continent by unifying it (except Egypt) under a single combatant command. The Pentagon’s statement that the new command’s focus would be preventing rather than fighting wars came later. In yet another tonal shift, the State Department in April 2008 portrayed AFRICOM’s inception as “history in the making.”<sup>3</sup>

The mixed signals in these official characterizations of AFRICOM have fueled rising fears of American hegemony and the “militarization” of America’s Africa policy. Africa Command currently operates out of the headquarters of European Command—which previously had responsibility for West Africa—in Stuttgart, Germany, with supporting Army and Navy components based in Vicenza, Italy, and Naples, Italy, respectively. Only war-torn Liberia has offered to host an AFRICOM regional headquarters. The fourteen-nation Southern African Development Community voted expressly not to do so. Algeria and Libya unceremoniously ruled out the possibility, and Morocco—the closest ally of the United States in North Africa—has shown no enthusiasm. In December 2007, Nigeria officially rejected a request that it agree to be the venue for a regional headquarters and encouraged other African nations to follow its lead; Ghana, arguably the most pro-American country in West Africa, did so. In May 2008, AFRICOM put aside plans for a permanent regional headquarters and decided instead to place staff in embassy-based offices of defense cooperation, on an as-needed basis.<sup>4</sup> More recently, African resistance to AFRICOM appears to be

diminishing, but the neuralgic attitude of African populations and governments toward American “boots on the ground” is durable. Given that reality, it is salutary that the U.S. Navy, rather than the Army, is taking the lead in a new strategic effort in Africa.

### THE AFRICA PARTNERSHIP STATION

This endeavor is the “Africa Partnership Station,” or APS, a small and varied group of warships that completed a six-month tour in the Gulf of Guinea, the first of its kind in that region, in April 2008.<sup>5</sup> The APS’s lead element was the USS *Fort McHenry* (LSD 43), a 610-foot amphibious landing ship whose shallow draft and multiple shore-connecting modes eased the task of pursuing concurrent operations in several locations. Other Navy ships involved were the high-speed vessel (HSV) *Swift*, a 322-foot catamaran originally meant for mine warfare and for developing littoral combat concepts; the USS *Annapolis* (SSN 760), a nuclear attack submarine; and the 567-foot USS *San Jacinto* (CG 56), a guided-missile cruiser. Part of the Navy’s Global Fleet Station program, the APS is based on the recently refined strategic concept of “maritime sector development.” The operational goal is to establish maritime safety and security by building African naval capabilities in maritime domain awareness, military professionalism, technical infrastructure, and operational response. The strategic objective is to make African nations both self-sufficient in maintaining maritime security and more favorably disposed toward the United States, through relationships enriched through the operation of the APS itself.

The notion of a “thousand-ship navy”—mooted by the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Michael Mullen, in 2005, when he was Chief of Naval Operations—contemplates a set of navies aligned with that of the United States with total assets of as many as a thousand vessels.<sup>6</sup> More particularly, Admiral Harry Ulrich—as (before his recent retirement) commander of Naval Forces Europe (NAVEUR), with a pre-AFRICOM area of responsibility that covered the Gulf of Guinea—believed that the Navy had to do something operationally constructive between maritime wars. To him, this meant disabusing African governments of any grandiose dreams they might have of acquiring power-projecting blue-water navies that they did not really need, while encouraging and supporting their efforts to develop brown-water patrolling and policing capabilities that would address immediate maritime security demands and to establish interoperable forces that would engender a truly regional capability.<sup>7</sup> The APS concept is designed to develop mutually advantageous relationships—that is, partnerships—rather than dependencies. For African nations, there are strong motivations to cooperate. A quarter of the cocaine consumed in Europe is transshipped through West Africa. Some 60 percent of the world’s human

trafficking occurs in sub-Saharan Africa. Attacks in Africa were largely responsible for the 10 percent global increase in piracy in 2007. Sub-Saharan Africa loses a billion dollars a year to illegal fishing, and illegal oil bunkering in Nigeria alone sucks three million dollars a day from the legitimate economy. Further, African nations share global strategic objectives, such as counterproliferation of weapons of mass destruction and interdiction of the narcotics traffic.

In formulating and honing the Africa Partnership Station concept, NAVFUR under Admiral Ulrich carefully considered what message it would send to African populations and governments and how it would affect their views of the United States—in a phrase, strategic communication. Barring outright armed intervention, NAVFUR decided, it made sense to operate from ships, without the political and psychological baggage that came with a big American ground presence. Hence, the APS would make long-term patrols with frequent but relatively brief stops, offering operational training to build durable ties and community outreach programs to improve local goodwill. Thus, the program seems a sensible diplomatic remediation of a George W. Bush-era foreign policy that has, on balance, alienated foreigners and made overseas partners more tentative about their links with Washington. At the same time, the creation of AFRICOM appears to signal a pragmatic and largely apolitical reorientation of American military priorities in an epoch of Middle East instability, a reorientation that stresses the protection of non–Middle East oil supplies and the containment of Islamic radicalism and terrorism.

### THE APS AND THE NAVY'S STRATEGIC RELEVANCE

In the first decade of the nineteenth century, the U.S. Navy helped reestablish maritime security in Africa during the small naval wars against the Barbary pirates. About a hundred years later, Theodore Roosevelt's "gunboat diplomacy"—employed to consolidate American primacy and bolster American political and economic interests—followed from Alfred Thayer Mahan's theory of sea power, which cast a powerful blue-water U.S. Navy as the vehicle and guarantor of national economic prosperity and international political clout. Neither model, however, neatly fits with the APS, which is the product of innovative twenty-first-century thinking within the Navy. It was the commander of Naval Forces Europe—not the Office of the Secretary of Defense or the State Department—who convened and hosted the inaugural Gulf of Guinea Maritime Security Conference, in October 2004. The Navy's theater security engagement plan, anchored by the APS, has been more enterprising vis-à-vis Africa than has planning by other elements of the U.S. interagency framework.

The APS also appears well designed to meet the Navy's internal challenges. Of the four major services, the Navy has the smallest pieces of the counterterrorism

and counterinsurgency “pies” and therefore faces budgetary disfavor in the short term. Strategically, it is incumbent on the Navy to husband its resources for any blue-water naval challenge from China in decades to come, while bureaucratically the service needs to secure a role in safeguarding more urgent American interests, such as ensuring access to oil and winning hearts and minds in places that could otherwise prove vulnerable to Islamic radicalism. The Navy has understood that a large American ground-force presence could undermine both of these key American strategic interests in Africa, by discomfiting local populations and moving people to active opposition to the United States. Maritime initiatives like the APS, however, are inherently less intrusive than ground-based ones; with the Navy in front, the United States could win over African governments and populations and shore up local goodwill. While the Navy may carry some historical baggage as a practitioner of gunboat diplomacy, the Africa Partnership Station projects a more benign image to potential allies, partners, and even adversaries.

Of course, certain U.S. ground-based military efforts in Africa may be unavoidable with respect to American interests, values, or both. Accordingly, in continuing to clarify the uses of Africa Command for public consumption, Washington should acknowledge openly and clearly that two of the new command’s biggest challenges may end up as sustaining energy security for mutual benefit, as well as peacekeeping and state building, which the Pentagon is weaving more thoroughly into U.S. military doctrine.<sup>8</sup> It should note further that AFRICOM will provide the United States with bureaucratic means for enhancing diplomatic and military-to-military relationships with key African states and regional organizations the better to meet these challenges. The United States should also emphasize its official preference that African forces or United Nations peacekeeping contingents, rather than the American military or U.S.-led coalitions, be used in African territory.

At first blush, such a dispensation seems to cut against the Defense Department’s reconfiguration of the ground-force structure through the dramatic expansion of the remit, personnel, and budget of U.S. Special Operations Command. The Combined Joint Task Force–Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA), which will become an AFRICOM asset, constitutes an early example of this new bias. It has facilitated impressive regional partnerships and a desirable interagency approach to humanitarian assistance and military-to-military training programs, but most Africans see that force mainly as a hard counterterrorism tool—its most visible effort being support of the Ethiopia-led occupation of Somalia and targeting of suspected terrorists there, sometimes with regrettable and politically inflammatory civilian losses. Thus, CJTF-HOA tends to signify uses of force that jeopardize rather than advance the long-term strategic

position of the United States in Africa.<sup>9</sup> Accordingly, the suggestions of some American officials that Africa Command's prospective mode of engagement should be modeled on CJTF-HOA's local-capacity-building mission seem dubious.<sup>10</sup> Instead, the policy thrust should be toward increases in AFRICOM funding for foreign military financing, international military education and training, and peacekeeping operations—to all of which the APS would contribute. This would at once accelerate the American objective of building African military capacity, improve interoperability critical for any combined deployments that may become necessary for peace enforcement or peacekeeping, and validate the stated U.S. intention to help Africans to help themselves.

So framed, Africa Command should become more acceptable than it initially has been to African governments and populations and ultimately win their approval, or at least acquiescence. Yet the Africa Partnership Station has already earned the confidence and enthusiastic participation of most littoral West African states, and it remains at once the most operationally effective and politically agreeable component of the military engagement of the United States with sub-Saharan Africa. In that light, it may well prove Africa Command's most politically valuable strategic asset.

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#### NOTES

This article represents the views of the author alone and is not intended to reflect the official position of the U.S. Navy, the Department of Defense, or any other U.S. government agency.

1. See, e.g., "AFRICOM: The United States' New Combatant Command," IISS *Strategic Comments* 13, no. 2 (March 2007). See also, for further background, Kathi A. Sohn, "The Global Fleet Station: A Powerful Tool for Preventing Conflict," in this issue.
2. See generally Lauren Ploch, *Africa Command: U.S. Strategic Interests and the Role of the U.S. Military in Africa*, Congressional Research Service [CRS] Report for Congress RL 24003 (Washington, D.C.: updated 10 March 2008).
3. Claudia E. Anyaso, "An Overview of AFRICOM: A Unified Combatant Command" (address, WIIS–U.S. Army War College AFRICOM Conference, Washington, D.C., 22 April 2008), available at [www.state.gov](http://www.state.gov). Anyaso is director of the Office of Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs for African Affairs.
4. See generally Darren Taylor, "Skepticism Abounds as AFRICOM Launch Looms," *Voice of America*, 26 May 2008, [www.voanews.com/english/](http://www.voanews.com/english/).
5. For detail on the APS, see Sohn, "Global Fleet Station," in this issue.
6. See Ronald E. Ratcliff, "Building Partners' Capacity: The Thousand-Ship Navy," *Naval War College Review* 60, no. 4 (Autumn 2007), pp. 45–58.
7. See U.S. Defense Dept., "Special DoD Briefing with Gen. Ward and Admiral Ulrich from the Pentagon, Arlington, VA," news transcript, 15 October 2007, available at [www.defenselink.mil/transcripts/](http://www.defenselink.mil/transcripts/).
8. See Mark Bellamy, Kathleen Hicks, and J. Stephen Morrison, *Strengthening AFRICOM's Case* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 8 March 2008), available at [www.csis.org/media/csis](http://www.csis.org/media/csis).
9. See, e.g., Jonathan Stevenson, "The Somali Model?" *National Interest*, no. 90 (July/August 2007).

10. See Thomas Barnett, "Continental Ambitions," *Guardian*, 20 December 2007; Ginny Hill, "Military Focuses on Development in Africa," *Christian Science Monitor*, 22 June 2007.



# U.S. NAVY SURFACE BATTLE DOCTRINE AND VICTORY IN THE PACIFIC

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*Trent Hone*

The basic strategic problems confronting the U.S. Navy during the interwar years of the 1920s and 1930s were how to move a large fleet across the Pacific, absorb or avoid Japanese attritional attacks, seize forward bases for further operations, and retain sufficient fighting strength to defeat Japan's Combined Fleet. Japanese and American policies in Asia were in conflict, and war was a possible result; the U.S. Navy planned to win by destroying Japan's navy, imposing a blockade, and forcing Japan's surrender. Details of the strategic dilemma were the focus of interwar plans, large fleet maneuvers, and complex war games at the Naval War College, in Newport, Rhode Island. By the time war arrived in 1941, the concept of an advance across the Pacific had become the subject of extensive and detailed strategic planning.<sup>1</sup>

However, the fleet that advanced through the Pacific in World War II was not the fleet of prewar plans. The prewar Navy had centered on a battle fleet, a battleship-centric formation that, concentrated together with a large fleet train, would move as a unit, seizing objectives along its path.<sup>2</sup> By early 1943, a new and more effective fleet organization had become available. Fast carrier task forces

had demonstrated their ability to form powerful striking forces, maneuver independently of slower assault shipping, and force a decision on their own.<sup>3</sup> The fleet that took the war to Japanese shores was built around carrier task forces.

It is generally assumed that the change from a battleship-centric formation to carrier task forces

*Trent Hone, a graduate of Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota, is a director of software engineering at Trimble Navigation, Ltd. He has published several articles on the U.S. Navy's tactical development before and during World War II and is coauthor of *Battle Line: The United States Navy, 1919–1939* (2006).*

invalidated the strategic and tactical planning carried out before the war, but this view is incorrect. The continuity in the Navy's strategic planning has already been illustrated by Edward Miller's *War Plan Orange*; a similar continuity can be found in tactical plans and doctrine.<sup>4</sup> Although the relatively high speed and flexibility of carrier task forces gave them operational maneuverability significantly greater than that of the battleship formations that preceded them, the basic tactical principles that the Navy employed in its battle doctrines remained unchanged.

The changes were confined to the method of applying and distributing these principles. Two important factors combined to temper the prewar concepts and produce a new approach. The first was the flexibility afforded by carrier task forces and the way they could concentrate against multiple targets simultaneously or against a single target without becoming a single target themselves. The second factor was wartime experience. By late 1942, the Navy's prewar approach to the development and dissemination of tactical doctrine had shown serious flaws. Ships and men were going into battle without the proper indoctrination, limiting their effectiveness.<sup>5</sup> A new approach was needed; the Navy's Pacific Fleet was the first to synthesize all three elements: the necessity of a new approach to tactical doctrine, the challenge introduced by fast carrier task forces, and existing prewar doctrinal concepts. These were married together by new tactical manuals, new fleet organizations, and refined battle plans. Together, these elements enabled success in the rapid string of offensives that moved through the Central Pacific, returned American forces to the Philippines, and crushed Japan as a naval power.

### OFFENSIVE IN THE CENTRAL PACIFIC

In early 1943, the Pacific War was entering a new phase. The Pacific Fleet, under Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, had defeated the Japanese in the attritional struggle for Guadalcanal and forced them onto the strategic defensive. It was essential that Nimitz's forces seize the opportunity afforded by their success and begin a strategic offensive, if they were to maintain the initiative.<sup>6</sup>

The Central Pacific would be the objective of the new offensive. Before the war, both sides had recognized the strategic importance of the Marshall, Caroline, and Mariana island groups, collectively known as the Mandates.<sup>7</sup> The islands occupied a central position and provided numerous bases. The Navy could use these to support further offensives in the direction of the Philippines, Formosa, or Japan itself. It was estimated that the seizure of the Mandates would "make available . . . approximately 20 airfields, 15 seaplane bases, 8 submarine bases, and 10 fleet anchorages."<sup>8</sup> Accordingly, in June 1943 Nimitz was directed by the Joint Chiefs of

Staff (JCS) to develop a plan to penetrate the Japanese perimeter; the initial target would be the Marshall Islands.<sup>9</sup>

The campaign plan Nimitz and his staff developed stressed two specific operational goals—a rapid pace of operations that would pressure the Japanese and keep the initiative firmly within the Pacific Fleet’s grasp, and a decisive showdown with the Japanese fleet. GRANITE, as the plan was code-named, stressed both of these objectives, emphasizing the need to maintain “unremitting pressure against Japan” and seeking the destruction of “the Japanese Fleet at an early date.”<sup>10</sup>

The fast pace of operations presented several challenges. It would be necessary to keep the striking arm of the fleet in forward areas almost continuously; this required a new approach to logistics.<sup>11</sup> Increased tempo also required a new approach to the development and dissemination of tactical doctrine. The pre-war concept of a fleet that would move through the Pacific as a cohesive unit had to be discarded.<sup>12</sup> To sustain the rapid pace of operations, individual ships and small task units would have to be interchangeable. They would have to move out of forward areas without disrupting the pace of the offensive; they would have to move into the combat zone and be effective immediately; and they could not be expected to spend adequate time training with their cohorts. Further exacerbating these issues was the need for ships of the Pacific Fleet to support two major offensives in two theaters simultaneously.<sup>13</sup> A new tactical manual, *Current Tactical Orders and Doctrine, U.S. Pacific Fleet*, known as PAC 10, would help resolve these issues.

Victory in a major fleet action is commonly assumed to have been a tactical objective of the Pacific Fleet, but the GRANITE plan illustrates that it was a strategic goal.<sup>14</sup> “All operations will be conducted as to maintain maximum readiness to take advantage of opportunities to bring important enemy naval forces to action.”<sup>15</sup> The Japanese fleet was a credible fighting force, and so long as it could sortie and threaten the success of an amphibious operation, it would limit the Pacific Fleet’s freedom of maneuver. Operational and tactical plans had to account for this contingency. Thus GRANITE assumed that “a major fleet action, although it may delay amphibious operations for a brief period, will greatly accelerate them thereafter.”<sup>16</sup>

The movement into the Mandates was expected to draw out the Japanese fleet and enable its destruction. Every subsidiary operation plan to GRANITE—including GALVANIC for the invasion of the Gilberts, FLINTLOCK and CATCHPOLE for the Marshalls, HAILSTONE for Truk, LONGHOP for Manus, and FORAGER for the Marianas—therefore had to account for the possible opportunity of decisive action. Tactical and operational plans were developed to meet this contingency.

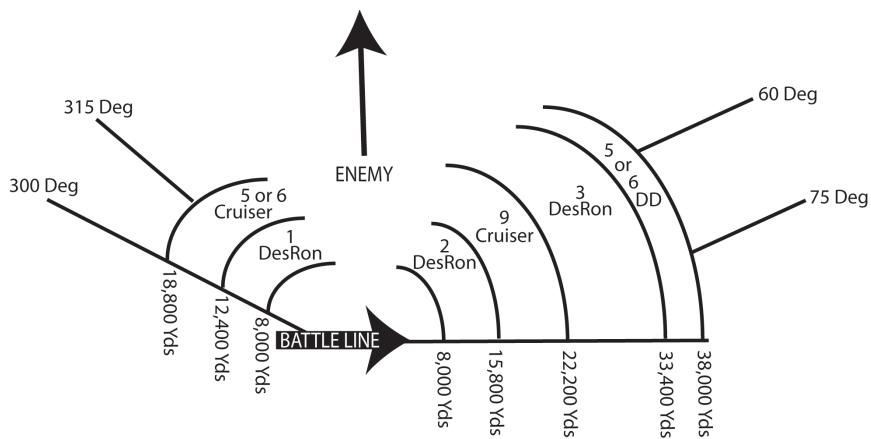
## PREWAR EXPERIENCE AND DOCTRINE

The Navy's existing tactical doctrine provided a backdrop for offensive preparations. Sophisticated and nuanced after refinement in the interwar period, this doctrine emphasized major fleet action and relied on several fundamental principles, including tactical concentration and coordinated action against the enemy.<sup>17</sup>

The doctrine's set of "major tactics," those for a large fleet in battle, were thorough and flexible; they covered a variety of contingencies apart from the main fleet action. Cruisers and destroyers were drilled in "night search and attack" procedures, designed to locate and damage an enemy battle fleet the night before a battle.<sup>18</sup> Battle-line aircraft carriers operated with the battle fleet, providing air cover for the battleships and fleet train.<sup>19</sup> Independent carrier task forces performed reconnaissance and targeted their opposite numbers to establish aerial superiority. Submarines scouted ahead and attacked enemy surface vessels.<sup>20</sup>

But the main emphasis of major tactics was the complex ballet of a battle-line action. Battle plans emphasized the cooperation of all fleet units to destroy the main objective—the enemy battle line. The publication of *Tentative Fleet Dispositions and Battle Plans, 1930* introduced a new level of complexity and coordination.<sup>21</sup> For the first time, the Navy had standard plans to govern the entire fleet in action. The new plans were further refined by *General Tactical Instructions, United States Navy* (FTP 142) in 1934 and by *General Tactical Instructions, United States Navy* (FTP 188) in 1940.

**FIGURE 1**  
**TYPICAL BATTLE FORMATION**



Source: *Operation Plan 12-44*, p. J-1-7.

Note: DD = destroyer, DesRon = destroyer squadron; Deg = degrees relative to enemy bearing.

Battle plans were designated by a system of coded numbers and letters. The first number would determine the overall type of action to be fought. A normal action on similar courses—that is, with the Navy's battle line steaming in the

same direction as that of the enemy—was indicated by 1. The numeral 2 indicated a reverse action, with the Navy's battle line moving in the opposite direction and chasing the enemy's tail. Reverse actions were believed to offer significant advantages, because the Japanese were expected to put fast and powerful forces in the van of their line; if the battle moved away from them, their effectiveness would be reduced.<sup>22</sup> Other numbers were used for more complex situations.<sup>23</sup> After the number followed a letter that prescribed a specific range band: *E* indicated a fight at extreme range, twenty-seven thousand yards and above; *L* signified long range, twenty-one to twenty-seven thousand yards; *M* was for medium range, seventeen to twenty-one thousand yards; and *C* meant close range, seventeen thousand yards and below. Other letters provided details on the use of supporting forces.<sup>24</sup> Common plans, such as “1L,” a normal action at long range, and “2M,” a reverse action at medium range, were described in detail.<sup>25</sup>

All these scripted plans assumed the same basic battle formation, a focused concentration of offensive power. Battleships were positioned in the center, with their broadsides facing the enemy (see figure 1); light forces—groups of cruisers and destroyers—were positioned on either flank. A group of destroyers was generally retained with the battle line to provide close protection against enemy destroyers and submarines. Carriers and ships of the fleet train would position themselves on the far side of the battle line from the enemy.<sup>26</sup> The intent was to allow all elements of the fleet to cooperate, to fight as a unit toward the common goal of destroying the enemy battle line.

Concentration of the battle fleet was particularly vital to success in a gunnery action, and the battle formation reflected this. Although the range and accuracy of battleship guns increased during the interwar period, battleships had to group together to maximize their fighting power.<sup>27</sup> Experiments during tactical exercises were conducted with distributed formations, but results had repeatedly shown that dispersion invited defeat in detail. Accordingly, concentration had become a doctrinal tenet.<sup>28</sup> A concentrated formation maximized the offensive power of not only the battle line but also the other fighting units that made up the battle fleet.

The lessons of the interwar period had also led to an emphasis on combined arms—coordinated attacks on the enemy formation by all elements of the fleet, including battleships, destroyers, and airplanes.<sup>29</sup> For a time submarines and minelayers were even considered important elements of a major fleet action.<sup>30</sup> All available weapons were to be used in concert. Admiral Harris Laning, writing in his 1933 pamphlet on fleet action, emphasized this point: “With so many weapons carried on such different types of ships it is apparent that if we are to get the maximum effect of all weapons and make our blow the sum total of the

blows of all, there must be perfect coordination between the types carrying them.”<sup>31</sup>

The effectiveness of each individual attack, then, was expected to be increased by coordination with other types. This was particularly true of attacks by airplanes and destroyers; under normal circumstances enemy battleships were believed capable of thwarting them through a combination of defensive fire and maneuver, but when combined with battleship gunfire, aircraft and destroyers were considered to be far more effective.<sup>32</sup> Coordinated attacks using planes, destroyers, and the guns of battleships were a recurring feature of the Navy’s Fleet Problems and tactical exercises. The idea of using aircraft and surface ships in concert to destroy an enemy fleet became an essential feature of the Navy’s plans for decisive battle.<sup>33</sup>

Submarines were another important element of the Navy’s plans in the interwar period. They had long been considered for use in major actions, but the specifics of how they were to be employed had not been resolved. Early plans had envisioned using them as a tactical scouting force for the fleet, sailing ahead to report on and attack approaching enemy ships.<sup>34</sup> This proved difficult to implement; submarines were too slow. In general, their usefulness in fleet operations proved limited. Wartime commanders would adopt a new solution.

## WARTIME LESSONS

Opportunities for the employment of “major tactics” were lacking in the two years following Pearl Harbor. The combat that did occur—furious battles of light forces and long-range carrier duels—revealed flaws in the Navy’s prewar approach to the development and dissemination of tactical doctrine.

### *Minor Tactics*

In contrast to preparations for decisive battle, “minor tactics”—those that would govern the employment of smaller forces—were neglected before the war. Very limited doctrinal guidance was provided for minor actions at the fleet level. Instead, individual squadron and task force commanders were expected to develop combat doctrines and battle plans themselves for the employment of their forces.<sup>35</sup>

This mechanism worked well under prewar conditions, when formations were cohesive and had time to drill under individual commanders. Where these circumstances held in wartime, the Navy’s light forces were effective in battle. The performances of Commander Paul H. Talbot’s Destroyer Division 59 at Balikpapan and Rear Admiral Norman Scott’s Task Force (TF) 64 at Cape Esperance are worthy examples. In both these cases, the forces involved were familiar with their commanders’ doctrines and were able to practice together

before going into action.<sup>36</sup> In the latter half of 1942, however, combat losses, the pace of operations in the Pacific, and the demands of a two-ocean war made this increasingly difficult. The climactic battles for Guadalcanal in November 1942 saw ships thrown together in haste; commanders had no time to develop common doctrine or plans, and the resulting losses were severe.<sup>37</sup> It became obvious that the development of “minor tactics” could not be left to commanders at sea.

The Pacific Fleet’s initial approach to addressing this problem was inadequate. “Tactical bulletins” and “confidential letters” on specific topics were produced and distributed to fleet units. These documents modified, enhanced, or introduced procedures that reflected lessons of combat and experience with new tactics and techniques. They covered a variety of topics—major action plans, night battle tactics, the use of radar, and the introduction of the Combat Information Center. Their proliferation, however, led to redundancy and inconsistency.<sup>38</sup> By 1943, war experience had shown that a comprehensive revision of tactical manuals was necessary.

### *Carrier War*

The Navy’s carrier battle doctrine was effective enough to allow operational, if not tactical, success in all the major carrier battles of 1942. However, lessons from combat illustrated that improvement was necessary, particularly in the coordination of multiple carriers within a single formation.<sup>39</sup> The Navy had limited experience with task forces containing multiple carriers. For much of the interwar period, the Navy had had only two large carriers for experiments and exercises, *Lexington* and *Saratoga*. During Fleet Problems, they were regularly placed on opposite sides; when teamed together, they operated in independent task groups or were tied to the battle line.<sup>40</sup>

Technological factors also contributed to the Navy’s lack of experience in this respect. Before the advent of radar and effective fighter-direction techniques, carriers were best protected by keeping them hidden. A carrier that had been located could be struck and rendered inoperable by an enemy attack. Dispensing carriers into separate strike forces, away from the main body and each other, was a logical defensive measure.<sup>41</sup> The war and the advance of technology changed the situation. Improved radars to detect incoming strikes and more effective techniques for vectoring fighters to intercept them allowed groups of carriers to pool resources and offer mutual support. The Navy’s carrier task force doctrine was revised on the basis of these developments and of lessons from the 1942 battles. Single-carrier formations were abandoned; task forces were formed around multiple carriers operating together.<sup>42</sup>

Even more fundamental changes would occur. Fast carrier task forces became the basis of the offensive power of the Pacific Fleet. The shift to carrier task

forces and away from a battle fleet offered opportunities. For instance, because each of the carrier task forces could operate independently, it was possible to disperse them and strike multiple targets simultaneously. This would help achieve one of the major operational goals of the offensive, a rapid tempo. However, this was not without risk; carriers were still considered vulnerable to surface action, and they needed support during their thrusts into the enemy's defensive perimeter.<sup>43</sup> The new, fast battleships were ideally suited to provide this support, and they would be made part of the carrier task forces.

The dispersal of battleship strength, however, ran counter to the principle of concentration the Navy had emphasized for decades. It introduced the risk that a lone carrier task force might be isolated and destroyed; it also made it essential that the carrier task forces concentrate prior to major fleet action in order to bring the battleships together. Thus, although dispersal enabled the rapid pace of operations, it hindered the second goal, the need to bring the Japanese fleet to decisive action. An approach that balanced the two factors was necessary.

### THE NEW APPROACH

A combination of approaches was used to satisfy the operational goals of the Central Pacific offensive. New fleetwide tactical manuals were developed that covered "minor tactics" and the operations of small task forces; the common doctrines they established allowed for the interchangeability of ships and task units demanded by the rapid operational tempo. Operation plans called for the seizure of multiple objectives but also acknowledged the need to concentrate for decisive action. Tactical plans emphasizing concerted action against the enemy prepared the Navy for the expected battles. Together, these methods ensured the success of the offensive in the Central Pacific.

In April 1943, Nimitz created a board to revise the Pacific Fleet Cruising Instructions. The officers of the board were ordered to review current doctrinal publications, examine combat reports, interview officers returning from combat zones, and produce a new set of cruising instructions.<sup>44</sup> They would in fact exceed this authority. By drawing on operational goals of the coming campaign, existing principles of the Navy's doctrine, and doctrinal flaws exposed by wartime experience, the board produced a new doctrinal manual for the Pacific Fleet, and the most important one issued by the wartime Navy.

Although carrier airpower would dominate the coming offensive, Nimitz chose three surface officers for the board and only one aviator. The senior member, Rear Admiral Robert M. Griffin, was an experienced surface warfare officer (as they are known today). He left the board before it completed its work, going on to command Battleship Division 3.<sup>45</sup> Captain Roscoe F. Good became senior member with Griffin's departure; later in the war he would command the

battleship *Washington*.<sup>46</sup> Captain E. M. Crouch replaced Griffin.<sup>47</sup> As commander of Destroyer Division 57, Crouch had survived the initial Japanese offensives in the South Pacific.<sup>48</sup> The aviator was Captain Apollo Soucek, who had served with distinction on the carrier *Hornet* and at the time of its loss had been its executive officer.<sup>49</sup> It was their labors that would produce *Current Tactical Orders and Doctrine, U.S. Pacific Fleet*, PAC 10.

PAC 10, issued in June 1943, provided what the Navy had been missing—a common set of tactical principles for the cooperation of small forces and detached units in battle. It corrected the underemphasis on “minor tactics,” granting them the same detailed treatment that major actions had received for over a decade.<sup>50</sup> The coded system of letters and numbers used for major actions was recycled and applied to small task forces. Compact battle formations developed specifically for combat by such forces were presented.<sup>51</sup> Existing battle formations for light forces in night combat were retained.<sup>52</sup>

Instead of having to create and distribute their own tactical doctrines, small task group commanders could now develop battle plans rapidly, having a common doctrine to which they could refer. This streamlined the process, relieved small-unit commanders of an unnecessary burden, and ensured a common approach.<sup>53</sup>

Now, new ships could familiarize themselves with PAC 10 as they prepared to join the fleet and, because the manual applied to all task forces in all Pacific combat zones, it became possible to move ships from group to group or theater to theater without reequipping them with lengthy instructions by their new commanders. This was an extremely important development, and it was stressed in the manual’s introduction.

PAC-10 is intended . . . to obviate necessity for . . . special instructions under ordinary circumstances and to minimize them in extraordinary circumstances. The ultimate aim is to obtain essential uniformity without unacceptable sacrifice of flexibility. It must be possible for forces composed of diverse types, and indoctrinated under different task force commanders, to join at sea on short notice for concerted action against the enemy without exchanging a mass of special instructions.<sup>54</sup>

Successors to PAC 10 built upon the foundation that the original provided. In February 1944, the U.S. Fleet followed the lead of its Pacific arm and issued *Current Tactical Orders and Doctrine, U.S. Fleet*, known as USF 10A.<sup>55</sup> USF 10A built directly upon PAC 10: its format, structure, and the majority of its contents were unchanged from the Pacific Fleet’s publication.<sup>56</sup> Although its title implied that it was an amendment of the prewar USF 10, *Current Tactical Orders and Doctrine, United States Fleet*, the new manual shared very little with its predecessor and

provided far more tactical detail.<sup>57</sup> A revision, USF 10B, followed in May 1945, introducing additional wartime lessons.<sup>58</sup>

### THE OFFENSIVE BEGINS

With PAC 10 the fleet solved two significant problems. First, as noted, the creation of a single, common doctrine allowed ships to be interchanged between task groups, and this in turn enabled the rapid operational tempo Nimitz desired. Second, shifting the development of small-unit tactical doctrine to the fleet level and out of the hands of individual commanders increased the effectiveness of all units, particularly the fast-moving carrier task forces. Tactical and operational plans for the coming offensive were built on this foundation.

#### *GALVANIC*

Although the JCS directive ordered the seizure of positions in the Marshalls, Nimitz considered a thrust directly into the island group too dangerous. Too little was known about Japanese positions; experience had demonstrated the importance of reconnaissance before amphibious landings, and the Marshalls were too far away for land-based planes to photograph the targets.<sup>59</sup> An intermediate objective was needed. Nimitz and his planners chose the Gilbert island group, formerly a British possession, recently seized by the Japanese. The code name for the operation was *GALVANIC*.

Nimitz's Central Pacific Force, augmented by ever-growing numbers of new ships and aircraft, was by November 1943 ready to begin major offensive operations. Vice Admiral Raymond A. Spruance had assumed command on 5 August.<sup>60</sup> The relative inexperience of the growing fleet had made a comprehensive doctrine for tactical operations imperative. Most of the ships of the force were new, the majority of their officers were reservists, and many of the men had never been to sea before.<sup>61</sup> These ships could not operate as a cohesive unit without a doctrine to guide them, particularly if the Japanese sought a fleet action.

The possibility of fleet action heavily influenced plans for *GALVANIC*. The Central Pacific Force would seize three atolls: Tarawa, Makin, and Abemama. Possession of these would guarantee American dominance of the Gilbert Islands and provide airfields from which to reconnoiter and attack the Marshalls. Although long-range bombers and reconnaissance aircraft could reach the Gilberts, the extreme range forced Spruance to provide direct air support for the invasion forces with his fast carrier task forces.<sup>62</sup> This severely limited the carriers' freedom of maneuver. In prewar exercises, combat forces caught while supporting amphibious assaults had been damaged by attritional raids and then defeated by major attacks.<sup>63</sup> At Savo Island, the Japanese had reinforced these lessons by decimating an Allied covering force.<sup>64</sup> Japanese responses in the Central Pacific were expected to be even more powerful.<sup>65</sup> Minor raids could be handled by the invasion

forces, using PAC 10 as a guide, but a major Japanese response would be a serious threat.<sup>66</sup>

Spruance's GALVANIC plan accounted for this possibility. The main objectives would be seized simultaneously, Tarawa by the Southern Attack Force and Makin by the Northern. The atolls were expected to be occupied before the Japanese could mount a major response.<sup>67</sup> Simultaneous attacks divided his forces, but the best defense against the threat of attack in the middle of an amphibious operation was to overwhelm the objectives quickly, granting the fleet freedom to maneuver; this also satisfied the desire for a rapid operational tempo.

The potential for a major action was very real. Powerful Japanese forces based at Truk in the Caroline Islands could quickly move into the Marshalls and challenge the invasion. Estimates suggested that the Japanese could oppose the attack with ten battleships, seven aircraft carriers, and supporting forces.<sup>68</sup> "Current Intelligence indicates the presence of the major portion of the Japanese Fleet in the Truk area at the present time. Whether this fleet can or will be used to interfere with GALVANIC we do not know. . . . [W]e must be prepared at all times during GALVANIC for a fleet engagement."<sup>69</sup>

Over a hundred miles separated Tarawa and Makin; the forces covering the assaults were too far apart to provide mutual support, unless Spruance had timely warning of a Japanese approach. He was extremely apprehensive that a powerful attack would fall on a portion of his force and defeat it in detail. Of the two island objectives, Makin was closer to the Marshalls and much more vulnerable to a Japanese response. Spruance expected air searches to give him adequate warning and allow concentration of the Central Pacific Force. If weather patterns were unfavorable, however, storm systems could prevent aerial searches in the direction of the Mandates; Spruance considered delaying the attack on Makin if such circumstances developed.<sup>70</sup>

Even if they did not, however, the forces around Makin had to be ready to defend themselves. Spruance placed significantly more firepower in his northern groups. The old battleships in the Northern Attack Force, *Idaho*, *Mississippi*, and *New Mexico*, had been extensively modified before the war and were the most powerful of the old battleships available.<sup>71</sup> In addition, all six fast battleships supporting the operation were near Makin, evenly divided between the carrier task group providing direct support to the attack and the "interceptor" carrier group.<sup>72</sup> The latter, under the direct command of Rear Admiral Charles A. Pownall, Spruance's carrier force commander, was positioned to intercept Japanese aerial attacks and provide early warning of enemy forces approaching from the Marshalls.<sup>73</sup> Spruance urged these carrier groups to remain concentrated: "Carrier Task Groups which are screened by fast battleships and are supporting the attack on Makin and covering our northern flank will . . . be operated in as

close tactical support as possible of each other and the combatant units of the Northern Attack Force.”<sup>74</sup>

If the Japanese sought battle, the nine battleships in the north could separate from their task groups and unite to form a powerful battle line under Rear Admiral Willis A. Lee.<sup>75</sup> But this was not Spruance’s desired approach. He wanted a margin of superiority over his foe, and his battle plan called for the entire Central Pacific Force to come together to counter any major Japanese move.<sup>76</sup> Three old battleships and additional ships supporting the landing at Tarawa would join the forces around Makin, giving Spruance a battle fleet of twelve battleships, nine heavy cruisers, three light cruisers, and twenty-eight destroyers.<sup>77</sup> It is important to emphasize that this battle fleet drew not only from the fast carrier groups but also from the invasion forces. As it would form on the spot, common doctrine would be essential.

Spruance’s GALVANIC plan emphasized the importance of destroying the Japanese fleet, and it echoed the goal of the GRANITE campaign.

If . . . a major portion of the Japanese Fleet were to attempt to interfere with GALVANIC, it is obvious that the defeat of the enemy fleet would at once become paramount. Without having inflicted such a defeat on the enemy, we would be unable to proceed with the capture and development of Makin, Tarawa, and Apamama [sic]. The destruction of a considerable portion of Japanese naval strength would . . . go far toward winning the war.<sup>78</sup>

In fact, the Japanese too anticipated a major fleet action. Prior to GALVANIC, when Central Pacific carrier task forces had raided Tarawa, Makin, and Wake Island, Admiral Mineichi Koga, commander in chief of the Combined Fleet, correctly anticipated that these actions signaled the start of an offensive. Twice—in September and again in October—he moved the bulk of his forces from his main base at Truk to Eniwetok in the Marshalls, ready to counter Spruance. Each time, when the expected offensive did not occur, Koga returned to Truk.<sup>79</sup> By the time of the landings on 20 November, Koga was no longer prepared. In late October, faced with a threat to his southern flank by Allied advances toward Bougainville, Koga reinforced the bastion of Rabaul.<sup>80</sup> He sent his carrier squadrons there, along with most of his cruiser forces.<sup>81</sup> Nimitz’s rapid operational tempo was delivering results. Frequent raids had kept the Japanese guessing about where the first blow would fall, and, pressured on two fronts, they chose to reinforce their southern flank. When Spruance moved into the Gilberts, stripped of its air squadrons and cruiser scouts, there was little the Combined Fleet could do. The looked-for decisive action did not materialize.

### *FLINTLOCK*

With the success of GALVANIC, attention quickly shifted to the Marshalls. The important question was how best to continue the rapid pace of the offensive and quickly neutralize Japanese positions in the island group. The essential initial objective was an airfield that could support bombers; there were bomber airfields on Wotje and Maloelap in the eastern portion of the Marshalls. A phased approach, breaking the capture of the Marshalls into eastern and western operations, was considered and endorsed by the JCS.<sup>82</sup> Nimitz and his planners rejected this idea; they did not want the offensive to degenerate into an attritional struggle like the fighting in the Solomons.

As plans for the Marshalls were refined, concurrent raids struck Japanese positions; PAC 10 facilitated these minor operations.<sup>83</sup> Lee's fast battleships were detached from the carrier task forces and moved to the South Pacific; along the way, they bombarded the Japanese base on Nauru, west of the Gilberts. Pownall led two of his carrier groups into the heart of the Marshalls, attacking the Kwajalein and Wotje atolls. Raids like these sustained the operational tempo. Pownall's strikes destroyed planes, sank ships, and damaged installations, but their most valuable achievement was a photograph of a large airstrip the Japanese were constructing on Kwajalein Island. This proved what none had expected, that a bomber airfield could be built on Kwajalein.<sup>84</sup>

Plans to capture the Marshalls in one operation were quickly finalized. Kwajalein, the centerpiece of the Japanese defensive position, would be seized; the eastern Marshalls would be isolated and left to wither on the vine. FLINTLOCK, as the operation was code-named, required three attack forces. The first two would strike Kwajalein; the northern element would assault the twin islands of Roi-Namur, while the southern would capture Kwajalein Island, on the southern end of the atoll. The third force would occupy undefended Majuro Atoll, which would become a local anchorage for assault forces, and be an operational reserve. The reserves would be held ready to assist in the capture of Kwajalein; if not needed there, they would take part in Operation CATCHPOLE, the assault on Eniwetok.<sup>85</sup>

The fast carrier task forces, now designated TF 58, had a new commander for FLINTLOCK, Rear Admiral Marc A. Mitscher. As in GALVANIC, they had to operate in direct support of the assault forces, but the previous approach of teaming a carrier task force to an assault objective was discarded. Pinning carriers to physical objectives restricted their mobility, and the decision had been criticized.<sup>86</sup> Mitscher would operate his carriers offensively in the Marshalls, rotating between supporting landings and neutralizing Japanese air bases.<sup>87</sup> Two of these carrier groups were kept near the main objectives at Kwajalein Atoll, close enough to concentrate quickly for mutual support. On 29 January 1944, Task

Groups (TGs) 58.2 and 58.3 attacked Kwajalein. The next day, TG 58.1 replaced TG 58.3, and the latter moved to Eniwetok, farther to the west and closer to Truk. These relative positions were held until TG 58.3 retired to fuel on 3 February.<sup>88</sup>

The use of TG 58.3 as the advanced guard was deliberate. That group contained the two newest battleships, *Iowa* and *New Jersey*. The fastest and most powerful in the fleet, these two battleships constituted Battleship Division 7. Their high speed, over 32.5 knots, allowed them to keep pace with the fast carriers.<sup>89</sup> With Battleship Division 7, TG 58.3 could outfight any enemy surface force it could not outrun. If a major Japanese counterattack ensued, the task group would fall back on Kwajalein. The remaining six fast battleships were divided evenly between TGS 58.1 and 58.2.

Major action was once again anticipated. This was the first advance into the Mandates, which were known to be an important element of Japanese defensive strategy. In prewar plans, Admiral Husband E. Kimmel had expected to entice the Japanese to battle in the Central Pacific by threatening their position in the Marshalls.<sup>90</sup> Now Nimitz expected to do the same with the much larger and more powerful Central Pacific Force.

Spruance's battle plan for FLINTLOCK again called for the concentration of all fifteen available battleships, new and old, into a single battle line.<sup>91</sup> Supporting units would be drawn from both the invasion fleet and the carrier groups. To guide the fleet in battle, Spruance planned to employ major action plans from FTP 188.<sup>92</sup> These provided a mutually understood frame of reference and required the minimum of signaling—though if necessary, Spruance would develop his own battle plans and distribute them by signal.<sup>93</sup> Admiral Lee would command the battle line, as before.<sup>94</sup>

#### *CATCHPOLE and HAILSTONE*

The anticipated Japanese response to FLINTLOCK did not occur. Majuro, Roi-Namur, and Kwajalein were all seized without interference from Japanese surface units. The reserve force moved to Eniwetok, initiating Operation CATCHPOLE. Admiral Spruance set his sights on the Combined Fleet. Aerial reconnaissance of Truk showed that major elements of the Japanese fleet were in the Carolines. A powerful attack, HAILSTONE, was planned to cover the landings at Eniwetok by neutralizing Truk and destroying any forces encountered.<sup>95</sup> If the Japanese fleet did not come out to fight, Spruance would take the fight to it.

Unlike previous major operations involving the fast carriers, HAILSTONE did not have an amphibious component; CATCHPOLE was a separate operation. HAILSTONE, however, was not just a raid but a deliberate attempt to destroy a large portion of the Combined Fleet. All the fast battleships were concentrated

into a single carrier group, TG 58.3, ready to deploy quickly and engage the enemy in the anticipated fleet action. The old battleships were left behind.<sup>96</sup>

By the time of the initial air strikes on 17 February 1944, the Japanese had withdrawn their heavy units from Truk, but a large amount of shipping was discovered and attacked in the lagoon. When a group of Japanese light forces attempted to escape through the northern passage, Spruance detached a high-speed surface striking force, TG 50.9, to intercept. Battleship Division 7 formed its core; two heavy cruisers and four destroyers were attached in support.<sup>97</sup> This was the first employment of the new battleship division in a role that would often be assigned to it—pursuit and destruction of enemy ships.<sup>98</sup> The high speed of the battleships made them especially well suited for it, and on this occasion they were able to destroy four Japanese ships; a lone destroyer escaped.

The creation and detachment of ad hoc units like this, with no opportunity to train together, had produced unfortunate results fifteen months before off Guadalcanal.<sup>99</sup> PAC 10 and the recently issued USF 10A had made an important difference, enabling tactical commanders to seize opportunities presented by the rapid operational tempo.

The ships of TG 50.9 were not the only ones waiting to strike Japanese cripples. Ten submarines had been sent to prowl the waters around Truk in concert with the operation.<sup>100</sup> On 16 February *Skate* sighted and torpedoed the cruiser *Agano*, sinking it. The submarine's place in the decisive battle had been found. In future operations commanders ashore would strategically position submarines to provide distant reconnaissance and to attack targets of opportunity.

Additional carrier raids followed. After the successful strike on Truk and the enemy withdrawal from the Carolines, Spruance was free to range deeper into the Japanese defensive system. On 23 February 1944, TF 58 struck Japanese air bases in the Marianas, attacking the islands of Guam, Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. On the last day of March and first of April, the fast carriers hit Palau and Yap. The rapid pace of operations emphasized in the GRANITE plan was being sustained, and it was keeping the pressure on the Japanese.

### *DESECRATE II*

The invasion of Hollandia on the northern coast of New Guinea was a southwest Pacific operation, not a Central Pacific one, but the JCS had decreed that the fast carriers would support it.<sup>101</sup> Seizure of the Japanese base complex between Tanahmerah and Humboldt bays would provide General Douglas MacArthur's Southwest Pacific Force with an ideal position from which to further its advance along the northern coast of the island.<sup>102</sup> Admiral Nimitz remained, however, focused on the destruction of the Japanese Combined Fleet, the primary aim of

GRANITE. On 23 March, during a visit to Brisbane, he emphasized the Navy's priorities to the general and made it clear that if the Japanese came out to fight, their fleet would become the primary objective of the fast carrier force.<sup>103</sup>

The participation of TF 58 in the operation was code-named DESECRATE II. Mitscher was in command. (Spruance and the Central Pacific Force's amphibious elements remained behind, preparing for the invasion of the Marianas.) As in FLINTLOCK, the fast carriers were to provide direct support to the assault forces and suppress nearby Japanese airfields. Mitscher used three carrier task groups: TG 58.1, which had no battleships, would range to the west and attack Japanese airfields at Wakde, Sawar, and Sarmi;<sup>104</sup> TG 58.2, with the two fast battleships of Battleship Division 7, was to support the landings in Humboldt Bay; and TG 58.3, with four other fast battleships, would cover the landings in Tanahmerah Bay.

This arrangement positioned the bulk of Mitscher's surface striking power in the center, facilitating concentration if the Japanese appeared in force. Should a powerful battle fleet be required for a major action, six battleships, ten heavy cruisers, three light cruisers, and twenty-two destroyers were to concentrate under Admiral Lee; a carrier group, TG 58.1, would operate in direct support, under Lee's command.<sup>105</sup> In battle, Lee expected to leverage plans and dispositions from FTP 188 and USF 10A.<sup>106</sup> The remaining two carrier groups, stripped of the bulk of their escorts, would remain under Mitscher's command and operate in distant support.<sup>107</sup>

Two additional plans were developed, for minor action, should the Japanese challenge with small forces. One teamed Lee's six battleships with two destroyer squadrons.<sup>108</sup> The other was a pursuit force built around Battleship Division 7, very similar to TG 50.9, which Spruance had sent around Truk; this time, the two fast battleships would be matched with two heavy cruisers and seven destroyers. Their preferred battle plan was "1E2," from USF 10A—an engagement on parallel courses at extreme range, with light forces on both flanks operating defensively.<sup>109</sup>

## DECISIVE BATTLE

By June 1944, Japanese bases in the Marshalls and Carolines had been seized or neutralized, the major base at Rabaul had been rendered untenable, and the Allies were rapidly advancing along the northern coast of New Guinea. It seemed as if the Japanese were content to let their defensive perimeter crumble without risking major fleet units, but this was about to change.

### *FORAGER*

The third major offensive of Spruance's force, officially designated the Fifth Fleet on 29 April 1944, was the seizure of the Marianas. Operation FORAGER comprised the capture of Saipan, Tinian, and Guam. Saipan would be attacked first, on 15 June; landings on Guam were initially scheduled for three days later. The assault on Tinian would follow, but the specific date remained flexible.<sup>110</sup> Because the capture of the Marshalls and Carolines had not produced a fleet action, the "prevailing opinion . . . was that the Japanese navy would not fight for the Marianas."<sup>111</sup>

But Spruance had to be prepared for that contingency, and his battle plan for the Marianas changed little from those developed for earlier operations.<sup>112</sup> As before, he expected to concentrate all his battleships into one formation; seven old ones supporting the amphibious assaults were to combine with seven fast battleships from the carrier groups to give a total of fourteen. Supporting ships would be drawn from the carrier task groups and assault forces. Concentration and employment of his entire force remained fundamental elements of Spruance's plan.<sup>113</sup> Concentration was also still a guiding principle of the employment of the fast battleships specifically: "In acting as a covering force have [carrier] task groups which are screened by fast battleships operate in as close tactical support of each other as the nature of their tasks and enemy action will permit."<sup>114</sup>

The increasing number of escort carriers in the invasion forces allowed the primary focus of the fast carriers to become the suppression of enemy air bases, rather than direct air support for the invasion. The plan called for the carriers to start their attacks three days before the landings, but this date was advanced a day, because of the "large estimated strength of enemy aircraft in the Marianas."<sup>115</sup> On June 11, planes from Mitscher's TF 58 struck Japanese positions on Saipan, Tinian, Guam, Rota, and Pagan. These attacks continued for the next two days.

The carriers operated in four task groups: TG 58.1 attacked Guam, and the other three hit Saipan and Tinian. The fast battleships were kept concentrated; TG 58.2 contained the two high-speed battleships of Battleship Division 7, TG 58.3 the other five fast battleships. Finally, TGs 58.1 and 58.4 were supported by cruisers.<sup>116</sup> The night before the landings, these two groups were sent north to attack the islands of Chichi Jima and Iwo Jima. The two other groups, with their battleships, remained to cover the landing beaches and assault forces.

In the meantime, the Japanese had resolved to contest the landings. On 12 June, having received word of the strikes in the Marianas, the new commander in chief of the Combined Fleet, Admiral Soemu Toyoda, issued orders to execute Operation A-GO, his plan for a major fleet action. Three days later, he made his

intention explicit: "The Combined Fleet will attack the enemy in the Marianas area and annihilate the invasion force. Activate A-Go Operation for decisive battle."<sup>117</sup> A powerful fleet was assembled under the command of Vice Admiral Jisaburo Ozawa, including nine carriers, five battleships, and eleven heavy cruisers.<sup>118</sup> This force approached the Marianas in two main groups. The carriers and three battleships, with Ozawa embarked, left their base at Tawi Tawi in the southern Philippines and sailed through the archipelago, transiting the San Bernardino Strait. A second force, with the large battleships *Yamato* and *Musashi*, came north from Batjan in the Moluccas and rendezvoused with Ozawa in the Philippine Sea.

Spruance received word of these movements from submarines and realized that a major action was possible if the Japanese continued their approach.<sup>119</sup> During the night of 14–15 June, he ordered TGs 58.1 and 58.4 to cut short their attacks on Chichi Jima and Iwo Jima and return for a rendezvous near Saipan on 18 June. On 16 June, he postponed the invasion of Guam and held a conference with Vice Admiral Richmond K. Turner, commander of the invasion force. The two developed a plan of action to deal with the approaching threat.

Two aspects of the developing situation presented particular challenges for Spruance. The battle for Saipan was still going on and limited his mobility; but he had expected that the Japanese would strike before one or more of the islands were secure all along.<sup>120</sup> The fact that the Japanese were approaching in two distinct groups was a more significant problem. Spruance's original plan had anticipated that the Japanese might have two formations, a carrier group and an advanced guard, but he had expected them to be within supporting distance.<sup>121</sup> The sightings so far suggested instead two independent formations.

Therefore, rather than concentrating the entire Fifth Fleet as per the plan, Spruance and Turner elected to strengthen TF 58 with five heavy cruisers, three light cruisers, and twenty-one destroyers detached from the invasion forces. The old battleships, three cruisers, and five destroyers were formed into a blocking force and sent west of Saipan.<sup>122</sup> This plan had two advantages: the blocking force provided close cover for the Saipan beachhead, and TF 58 retained its mobility by separating itself from the slower old battleships. On 17 June, in preparation for a surface action, Admiral Mitscher recommended detaching the battleships entirely from the carrier task groups and placing them into a separate formation.<sup>123</sup> This would prevent the confusion that would inevitably result if the battleships and their escorts had to form in the middle of an air battle. Spruance concurred; the resulting TG 58.7 was placed under command of Admiral Lee. It contained seven battleships, four heavy cruisers, and thirteen destroyers.<sup>124</sup>

Spruance then issued his battle plan. It called for air strikes to disable the enemy carriers and surface action by the battle line: “Our air will knock out enemy carriers . . . then will attack enemy battleships and cruisers to slow or disable them. Task Group 58.7 will destroy enemy fleet either by fleet action if enemy elects to fight or by sinking slowed or crippled ships if enemy retreats.”<sup>125</sup>

Early on 18 June, when TGs 58.1 and 58.4 were to rejoin, a new submarine contact suggested the Japanese were close enough for a surface action that night. Mitscher asked Lee if he desired a night action.<sup>126</sup> Lee declined emphatically: “Do not[,] repeat[,] do not believe we should seek night engagement.”<sup>127</sup> Lee’s response reflected both his own experience and the limited training of his command.<sup>128</sup> He had fought and won a night battle and knew how quickly such an action could degenerate into a melee, particularly if the forces involved lacked cohesion.<sup>129</sup> Lee’s formation, formed on the spot from four different task groups, could operate together in daylight, by virtue of the common doctrines of USF 10A, but it was not prepared for night action.<sup>130</sup> Lee’s comments after his earlier battle provide clues as to his state of mind at this point: “Our battleships are neither designed nor armed for close range night actions with enemy light forces. A few minutes intense fire . . . from secondary battery guns can, and did, render one of our new battleships deaf, dumb, blind and impotent through destruction of radar, radio and fire control circuits.”<sup>131</sup>

Soon after Lee responded, Spruance decided against night action.<sup>132</sup> He did not want to get too far from the forces at Saipan and risk defeat in detail. It is likely that he also wanted to ensure the concentration of all elements of TF 58; TGs 58.1 and 58.4 had not yet rejoined. In his response, Spruance mentioned concern at the prospect of a “diversionary attack” on the flank.<sup>133</sup> Most interpretations take this to mean that Spruance worried that a Japanese southern force would slip beyond him to raid the invasion beaches, but there is another possibility.<sup>134</sup> Captured Japanese planning material, which Spruance had reviewed, discussed “flanking,” but in another context—attacking an opposing carrier force after its attack planes had been committed to another, less important, target.<sup>135</sup> The Japanese believed they had been flanked in this sense at Midway, in that their carriers had been struck by surprise from an unanticipated direction while preoccupied with attacking Midway Island.<sup>136</sup> They hoped to do the same to the Americans in future battles, and since Spruance had come into possession of a Japanese document discussing this approach, it is likely that he expected to face such tactics.<sup>137</sup> This explains his preference for remaining concentrated and not striking in force until the Japanese had shown their hand.

Spruance’s emphasis on concentration continued to influence the developing action. He did not accept Mitscher’s recommendation to detach TG 58.1 and operate it to the northwest in order to cut off Ozawa’s escape route to the home

islands.<sup>138</sup> When a direction-finding fix from Pearl Harbor on 18 June placed the Japanese formation approximately 355 miles to the west, Mitscher recommended closing at night to launch a morning strike and get the battleships into position.<sup>139</sup> Spruance again refused, citing the possibility of an “end run.”<sup>140</sup> With that decision, the chance for a decisive action was lost.

The details of the ensuing battle are well known.<sup>141</sup> The Japanese sent a series of air strikes against TF 58, but none succeeded in causing major damage; their losses in planes and pilots were tremendous. Unable to sustain the attacks, Ozawa turned toward Japan and began to withdraw. Spruance pursued, and on the evening of the next day a long-range strike succeeded in sinking the carrier *Hiyo*, but Spruance again refused to detach task forces.<sup>142</sup> Before the action, Vice Admiral Charles A. Lockwood, commander of the Pacific Fleet’s submarines, stationed four of his boats in a square surrounding the area in which he believed Ozawa’s forces would operate. On 19 June, two of them found their targets. *Albacore* sighted and torpedoed Ozawa’s flagship, *Taiho*, just after it had completed launching its first strike; eight hours later *Taiho* sank, destroyed by the fires that ultimately resulted. In the interim, three torpedoes from *Cavalla* sank carrier *Shokaku*.<sup>143</sup>

The outcome in the battle of the Philippine Sea, however, was not decisive, even when the successes of submarines are considered. The Japanese were soundly defeated, but the majority of their fleet units, including most of their carriers and all their battleships, withdrew to fight again. Nonetheless, the first phase of the decisive naval battle of the Pacific War, the carrier duel, was over.

### *KING II*

In the summer of 1944, in order to keep up the rapid pace of operations in the Pacific, Admiral Nimitz developed a second command for the Central Pacific Force, parallel to that of Spruance. The two flags and their respective staffs would command the same ships, alternately directing an operation and planning their next, thereby allowing less time between offensives and increasing the pressure on the Japanese. Admiral William F. Halsey, commander of the Third Fleet, was selected to be Spruance’s counterpart. When under Halsey’s command, the ships of the Central Pacific would be the Third Fleet; when Spruance led them, they would once again become the Fifth Fleet.<sup>144</sup>

Halsey took Mitscher and the fast carriers, now TF 38, on a series of raids in September 1944. They struck the Palaus, Mindanao, and the Visayas, covering the invasions of Morotai, the Palaus, and Ulithi. The lack of resistance encountered convinced Halsey that the existing timetable for landings in the Philippines could be accelerated. Within a matter of days, the JCS had approved the new schedule.<sup>145</sup>

The invasion of Leyte, code-named KING II, differed from previous large amphibious operations. The unity of command that had existed in GALVANIC, FLINTLOCK, and FORAGER was absent. The Central Pacific and southwestern Pacific offensives met in the southern Philippines, and KING II used forces from both theaters. Command was divided between the two, hindering effectiveness and leading to confusion during the naval battles that resulted.<sup>146</sup> Halsey's Third Fleet retained the fast carriers, but the Central Pacific Force's amphibious units, including the old battleships and escort carriers, were transferred to the Seventh Fleet, under command of Vice Admiral Thomas C. Kinkaid, who was subordinate to General MacArthur. Kinkaid led the amphibious assault.

As in FORAGER, the fast carriers were to suppress Japanese air bases and provide direct air support for the amphibious assault, but Halsey was freed of many of the burdens his predecessor had faced in the Philippine Sea. Without the old battleships and amphibious forces under his command, Halsey was able to develop plans that took full advantage of the mobility of his task forces. He was also free to seek out the Japanese; Nimitz's plan for the operation stressed that "in case opportunity for destruction of major portion of enemy fleet offers or can be created, such destruction becomes the primary task."<sup>147</sup>

Third Fleet battle plans stressed the importance of this task.<sup>148</sup> They differed from those of the Fifth Fleet in two important respects. Lacking the old battleships, Halsey ignored them in his tactical planning and envisioned a battle line composed of only fast battleships. This increased his flexibility, because all forces in the battle fleet had sufficient speed to keep up with a carrier formation. Halsey planned to capitalize on this with a well developed prewar technique.

Halsey planned a coordinated attack. He assumed that his four carrier groups, far superior to what the Japanese could muster at this stage of the war, would either win the opening carrier duel or sight the enemy too late in the day for strike operations. In either case, the ensuing plan would be the same. Rather than steaming away at night as Spruance had done, Halsey would approach and, along the way, reorganize the carrier forces. Battleships, cruisers, and supporting destroyers would leave their respective task groups and form TF 34, a battle formation under the command of Admiral Lee, about seventy miles ahead of the carriers. As morning approached, planes would ready and launch. The coordinated movements of the fleet were designed to bring the attacking planes and the battleships within range of the enemy at the same time, at dawn.<sup>149</sup>

Particular effort . . . will be made to gain a position from which a predawn carrier strike may be launched concurrently with the release of fast heavy striking force from a favorable attack position. Development of a favorable tactical situation . . . will be effected by dispatching TF 34 and carrier air groups to attack the enemy. The approach will be so conducted as to give TF 34 an opportunity to strike from a

favorable position and so coordinate its offensive efforts with those of carrier air groups.<sup>150</sup>

Halsey considered this the “optimum plan for decisive action.”<sup>151</sup> It would collect nearly all the striking power of TF 38 into one decisive pulse and overwhelm the Japanese. Halsey had revived the prewar coordinated attack.

The main landings took place on 20 October, with two of Halsey’s carrier groups providing direct support. Task Groups 38.1 and 38.4, with cruisers in support, attacked targets on Leyte and suppressed airfields on Mindanao and the western Visayas.<sup>152</sup> The two other carrier groups, TGs 38.2 and 38.3, remained concentrated farther north, scouting for potential threats from the direction of Japan and Formosa.<sup>153</sup> Halsey kept all the battleships together: TG 38.2 had Battleship Division 7 (*Iowa* and *New Jersey*), and four battleships were with TG 38.3.<sup>154</sup>

The possibility that the Japanese would commit significant naval forces to defend the Philippines was not seriously considered in Third or Seventh Fleet plans.<sup>155</sup> This was a mistake; in the summer of 1944, the Japanese had created a series of plans, code-named SHO-GO (Victory).<sup>156</sup> The southernmost of these, SHO-1, covered the defense of the Philippines.<sup>157</sup> On the basis of preliminary landings around Leyte, the Imperial General Headquarters made the decision to implement SHO-1 on 18 October.<sup>158</sup> Two days later, Vice Admiral Ryunosuke Kuasaka, chief of staff to Combined Fleet commander Admiral Soemu Toyoda, issued the final plans to units of the Combined Fleet.<sup>159</sup>

The Japanese moved toward Leyte in four elements. Vice Admiral Takeo Kurita’s 1st Diversionary Attack Force divided in two, one part comprising his 1st and 2nd sections; led by Kurita himself, it would transit the San Bernardino Strait. Kurita’s 3rd Section, commanded by Vice Admiral Shoji Nishimura, was ordered to pass through Surigao Strait. Kurita planned to reunite with Nishimura in Leyte Gulf early on the morning of 25 October and destroy the invasion forces.<sup>160</sup> The third Japanese element, the 2nd Diversionary Attack Force, under Vice Admiral Kiyohide Shima, would come through Surigao Strait behind Nishimura and also attack the invasion fleet. Between them, these three attack forces had seven battleships, sixteen cruisers, and twenty-three destroyers.<sup>161</sup>

The fourth and last Japanese group, commanded by Vice Admiral Jisaburo Ozawa, was a decoy. Ozawa took the Combined Fleet’s remaining carriers south from Japan, hoping with them to draw the Third Fleet’s covering forces back north, away from Leyte Gulf.<sup>162</sup> Ozawa had four carriers, two battleship-carriers, three cruisers, and nine destroyers.<sup>163</sup>

Halsey, still confident that the Japanese would not seek battle, was preoccupied with preparations for the Third Fleet’s major follow-on operation, an

attack against the Japanese home islands.<sup>164</sup> On 22 October he sent TGs 38.4 and 38.1 to the fleet base at Ulithi to refuel and rearm. Before detaching them, he took two battleships from TG 38.3 and transferred them to TG 38.4, to go with it to Ulithi.<sup>165</sup> Two task groups and just four fast battleships remained in the area.

The same day, Kurita's 1st and 2nd sections left their anchorage at Brunei Bay on the north coast of Borneo. U.S. submarines again provided early warning of Japanese moves. The morning of 23 October, while transiting Palawan Passage, the submarines *Dace* and *Darter* sighted and attacked Kurita's ships, hitting three heavy cruisers—*Atago* and *Maya* were sunk, *Takao* was damaged and forced to retire.<sup>166</sup> Halsey and Kinkaid received these sightings and additional information from long-range air searches; they became convinced that the Japanese were moving toward the Philippines in force. Halsey quickly realized his dispositions were inadequate and recalled TG 38.4 and its two battleships. He did not recall TG 38.1. That group had more planes available than TG 38.4, but Halsey considered the two battleships more important.<sup>167</sup>

Halsey disposed his forces to allow effective aerial searches to the west and provide warning of the Japanese approach. TG 38.3 was farthest to the north, east of Polillo Island. He placed TG 38.2 in the center, off the San Bernardino Strait, and TG 38.4 in the south, east of Samar.<sup>168</sup> This arrangement dispersed Halsey's battleship strength—each task group had just two battleships—but allowed him to cover the major passages through the archipelago.

On 24 October, Kurita and Nishimura were sighted by Halsey's carriers. TG 38.4 subjected Nishimura to a single attack, slightly damaging two of his ships. Since Kurita posed the greater threat, Halsey left Nishimura to Kinkaid and moved quickly to consolidate his battleship strength: TG 38.4 was ordered north; all three carrier groups would concentrate off the San Bernardino Strait, launching strikes against Kurita's formation along the way. Over the course of several hours repeated air attacks sank the battleship *Musashi* and damaged several other ships. In the early afternoon Kurita turned back, seeking relief from the onslaught.<sup>169</sup>

In the meantime, Halsey had issued a preparatory battle order in expectation of Kurita's force exiting the strait. TGs 38.2 and 38.4 were close enough to concentrate; the plan combined Battleship Division 7 with the two battleships from TG 38.4. Four battleships, five cruisers, and ten destroyers would form as a surface striking unit. Admiral Lee would command the resulting formation, designated TF 34.<sup>170</sup> Because TG 38.3 was too distant, its battleships were not included. Halsey planned to make do with the forces immediately on hand.

He did not implement the plan; a variety of circumstances convinced him otherwise. Scouting reports indicated that Kurita was withdrawing, heavily damaged. Also, intelligence available to Halsey suggested that Japanese forces in

the area of the home islands were stronger than in fact they were, and this led him to the conclusion that the most serious threat would come from the north.<sup>171</sup> In the afternoon, planes from TG 38.3 found that threat: they sighted Ozawa's main body. Halsey considered his alternatives.

[The option of] leaving TF 34 to block San Bernardino Straits . . . was rejected; the potential strength of the Northern Forces [Ozawa] was too great to leave unmolested, and requiring TF 34 to engage the Center Force [Kurita] while at the same time exposed to attack by land-based and carrier-based air attack was not sound. This alternative spread our strength and risked unprofitable damage in detail.<sup>172</sup>

During the evening of 24 October, Halsey made the decision to move north with all his forces and pursue Ozawa.<sup>173</sup>

Along the way, he put his battle plan in motion. The fleet slowed as all six battleships, seven cruisers, and eighteen destroyers separated themselves from the carrier groups and formed TF 34, under Lee. TG 38.2 was designated as the battle-line carrier group, to support Lee's surface forces.<sup>174</sup> Mitscher expected the surface contact to take place at 4:30 AM, but estimates of the Japanese position were incorrect. The first air strike from the carriers hit Ozawa long before TF 34 could come into action. Coordinated attacks would have to wait until the battleships were in position.

Halsey ran out of time. As TF 34 approached the Japanese, urgent messages were received from Kinkaid. Escort carriers on his northern flank were engaged in a running battle with Kurita's 1st and 2nd sections. The remnants of the 1st Striking Force had reversed course, passed through the San Bernardino Strait, and were now moving toward the landing beaches. Halsey sent TF 34, minus four cruisers and nine destroyers, south to assist; TG 38.2 followed in support.<sup>175</sup>

The cruisers and destroyers detached from TF 34 filled in and formed a surface striking force.<sup>176</sup> They continued north and attacked Japanese ships damaged by the carrier strikes, finishing off the carrier *Chiyoda* and sinking the destroyer *Hatsuzuki* after a running gun battle.<sup>177</sup> Ozawa's other carriers, *Zuikaku*, *Zuiho*, and *Chitose*, were sunk by planes from TF 38.<sup>178</sup> The submarine *Jallao*, coached to the scene with several consorts by Admiral Lockwood, sank the light cruiser *Tama*, previously damaged by air attack.<sup>179</sup> Demoralized and broken, Ozawa's force retreated. In the meantime, Nishimura's 3rd Section had steamed into a trap set by Kinkaid's Seventh Fleet in Surigao Strait and been virtually annihilated.

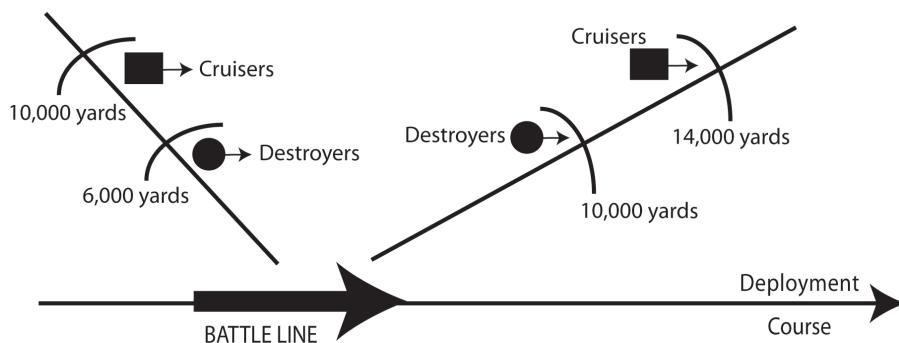
Although Kinkaid had not anticipated that the Japanese would seek major action, his forces had been well prepared for it. The Seventh Fleet's battle plan called for Rear Admiral Jesse B. Oldendorf's Fire Support Group, designated TG 77.2, and Rear Admiral Russell S. Berkey's Close Covering Group, TG 77.3, to

combine in the face of strong enemy opposition.<sup>180</sup> Oldendorf had all six of the old battleships supporting Leyte, along with escorting cruisers and destroyers; he and his ships had been part of the Fifth Fleet's offensives in the Central Pacific.<sup>181</sup> Berkey's group was part of the multinational Seventh Fleet.<sup>182</sup> Depending on the nature of the threat, Kinkaid planned to detach Berkey, Oldendorf, or both. Kinkaid also envisioned combining Berkey's group with units from the Third Fleet if Japanese light forces threatened the invasion fleet.<sup>183</sup> Details were left up to the individual commanders. USF 10A was perfect in situations like these, in which disparate task groups would come together for battle; Oldendorf would put it to good use.

By noon on 24 October, Kinkaid had realized that the Japanese were seeking major action and ordered Oldendorf to prepare for a night battle in Surigao Strait and to take Berkey's TG 77.3 in support.<sup>184</sup> Oldendorf began to formulate a plan. He called Berkey and his battle-line commander, Rear Admiral George L. Weyler, to his flagship so he could familiarize them with the details. The battleships were loaded mainly with bombardment ammunition; Oldendorf stressed the need to fire at medium ranges, where the effect would be maximized. He also discussed the use of destroyer attacks before the main action; he planned to send them down both sides of the strait.<sup>185</sup>

After the conference, Oldendorf signaled his battle plan to the six battleships, eight cruisers, and twenty-one destroyers of his force. The battle plan specified disposition "A-2" from USF 10A, intended for the employment of task forces like this one.<sup>186</sup> "A-2" (see figure 2) placed the battle line in the center and light forces at either flank.<sup>187</sup> This was an efficient arrangement for the confined waters at the head of the strait, and it maximized the effectiveness of Oldendorf's gunfire.

**FIGURE 2**  
**FORMATION "A-2"**



Source: USF 10A, p. 4-12.

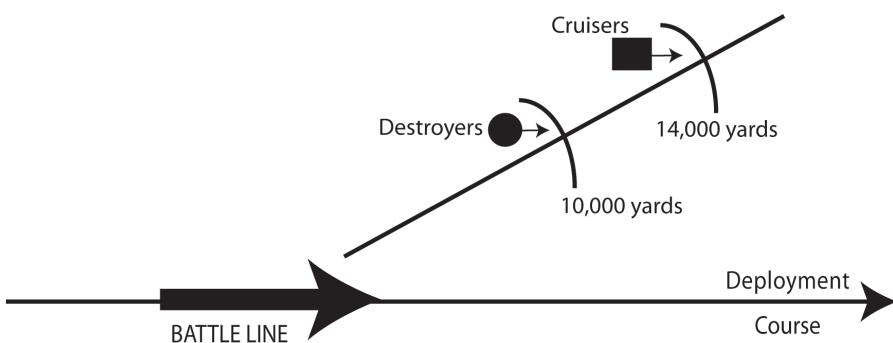
The plan worked to perfection, including one small, extemporized addition. Picket destroyers from TG 79.11 commanded by Captain Jesse G. Coward were the first to attack.<sup>188</sup> Coward had joined Oldendorf on his own initiative, displaying the aggressiveness inherent in the Navy's doctrine.<sup>189</sup> Nishimura's attempt to penetrate into Leyte Gulf failed, disorganized by a series of destroyer torpedo attacks and shattered by battleship and cruiser gunfire. One destroyer and a badly damaged cruiser were all that survived to retreat down the strait. Following in Nishimura's wake, Shima's 2nd Diversionary Attack Force "fired ineffective torpedoes at radar ghosts to the north" and quickly withdrew.<sup>190</sup>

Soon thereafter, Kurita's force reappeared off Samar, within visual range of Kinkaid's escort carriers. A desperate fight ensued; both Halsey and Kinkaid mustered powerful forces to counter the threat.<sup>191</sup> Kinkaid ordered Oldendorf to send a battleship division, a heavy cruiser division, and supporting destroyers to assist the carriers. Oldendorf chose to send the three battleships that had the most armor-piercing ammunition remaining, all four of his heavy cruisers, and twenty destroyers, all of which had at least five torpedoes.<sup>192</sup>

As we have seen, Halsey sent TF 34 and TG 38.2 south to support Kinkaid, but they would not find Kurita. Shortly after noon on 25 October, he had turned to the north and headed back toward the San Bernardino Strait. When this became apparent, Halsey ordered TG 34.5, a pursuit force formed around Battleship Division 7, to separate from TF 34 and go after the retreating enemy.<sup>193</sup>

The pursuit force contained two battleships, three cruisers, and eight destroyers under the command of Rear Admiral Oscar C. Badger. Halsey's intention was for Badger to employ battle disposition "A-1" (see figure 3) from USF 10A, concentrating all light forces in the van.<sup>194</sup> TF 34.5 would engage on parallel courses

**FIGURE 3  
FORMATION "A-1"**



at long range, with light forces on the offensive.<sup>195</sup> This was battle plan “1L1.” Badger arrived too late to engage Kurita but in the darkness found destroyer *Nowaki*, which had remained behind to pick up survivors, and sank it. The battle of Leyte Gulf was over.

Japanese efforts to contest the landings in the Philippines and Marianas had led to the decisive battle both navies had anticipated before the war.<sup>196</sup> Although the expected clash of battle lines did not occur, the outcome was decisive. The remaining Japanese surface forces lacked the fuel and strength necessary to challenge further offensives; the Combined Fleet had become a hollow shell.

### **PREWAR PRINCIPLES AND WARTIME LESSONS**

Several important elements of the Navy’s tactical doctrine contributed to the success of the rapid offensive through the Central Pacific. The new approach to the development and dissemination of doctrine introduced by the Pacific Fleet in the summer of 1943 prepared it to divide itself into a series of carrier-centric task forces and ensured that when the fleet came together in the face of enemy surface threats, it could act as a cohesive unit. This approach rectified the shortcomings of prewar doctrinal development by relieving task force commanders of the burden of creating battle plans and doctrines for their forces.

Principles of prewar doctrine also contributed to success. The most obvious of these was the depth and richness of the Navy’s prewar major action plans, which relied on concentration of all available forces and cooperative action against the enemy battle line. The influence of these principles can be seen in the major action plans developed by Spruance, Mitscher, and Halsey. The coordinated attack attempted by the Third Fleet was derived directly from prewar concepts.

The synthesis of prewar principles and wartime lessons in PAC 10 and USF 10A also benefited lower-level commanders, who consistently relied upon them. The way Lee and Oldendorf leveraged the new manuals to ensure cooperation and common understanding has been described.<sup>197</sup> Other commanders, including Badger, Weyler, Rear Admiral John F. Shafroth, and Rear Admiral Giffen, employed them the same way.<sup>198</sup> Use of these doctrinal manuals became pervasive—and this was essential. Because the standard operational formations were fast carrier groups, surface commanders could not assume they would be able to concentrate all ships of their battle formations for practice or indoctrination. Coordinated action could only be ensured through specific common doctrines provided at the fleet level or above.

However, the Navy’s approach was not without its flaws. The worst of these was the failure to anticipate Japanese responses to the increasing size and power of the U.S. carrier forces. The Japanese addressed the problem in several ways,

two of which are relevant here.<sup>199</sup> The first was continued emphasis on a potential equalizer that had been an important part of their surface warfare doctrine for years—night battle. The second was the use of divided dispositions and dispersed formations.

Both of these responses were asymmetric, and the Navy did not deal with them effectively. This was particularly true of night combat. Existing doctrinal principles, reinforced by prewar exercises and wartime lessons, stressed that night action was undesirable, dangerous to powerful surface units. Concentrated formations of light forces could win minor battles at night, but major actions were to be fought in daylight. Spruance and Lee showed no desire to challenge these principles on the night of 18 June in the Philippine Sea and, as a result, missed an opportunity to force the Japanese into a decisive battle. Four months later, Oldendorf's ad hoc task force achieved overwhelming victory at Surigao Strait, suggesting what might have been.

The second Japanese response that caused problems touched upon a solidly entrenched principle of the U.S. Navy's tactical doctrine, concentration. Concentration was considered essential to the effectiveness of a battle fleet. Prewar plans assumed that the Japanese approach to decisive battle would also emphasize concentration and that major actions would accordingly be fought between massed formations. The Japanese use of dispersed task groups in the carrier battles of 1942 should have challenged this assumption, but it did not. Even in 1944, by which time the U.S. Navy had sufficient strength to divide into multiple task forces and fight two battles simultaneously, it developed no major action plans to counter dispersed enemy formations.

Spruance and Halsey emphasized concentration in their battle and operational plans. This conservative approach, driven by the fear of defeat in detail, limited their opportunities when the Japanese gave battle. In the battle of the Philippine Sea, Spruance repeatedly insisted on remaining concentrated and refused to capitalize upon the mobility and flexibility of his multiple carrier task forces. This reluctance allowed the Japanese to strike the first blow and permitted them to withdraw when their attacks failed. Halsey was presented with a perfect opportunity to finish off the Combined Fleet at Leyte; a judicious division of forces would have allowed him to defeat both Kurita and Ozawa on 25 October. But Halsey did not seriously consider divided action.<sup>200</sup>

The lesson was learned eventually, but too late. In his analysis of the October fighting, Vice Admiral George D. Murray, Commander, Air Force, Pacific Fleet, wrote, "Concentration, though usually sound, may sometimes be pursued too far, with diminishing returns. The ability to divide forces cleverly, as developed by the enemy, and to 'unconcentrate' quickly, may often be an advantage."<sup>201</sup> Unfortunately, the failure to recognize and adapt to Japanese asymmetries had

already prevented Spruance and Halsey from crushing the Combined Fleet in a single decisive blow.

Ultimately, it made no difference—Leyte Gulf destroyed Japan as a naval power. This victory was achieved not just by success in battle but through sustained campaigning. The Central Pacific offensive is an illuminating example of the benefits of prioritizing strategic, operational, and tactical goals appropriately. The main strategic objective, the defeat of Japan, was paramount. It was achieved by a sustained offensive through the Japanese defensive perimeter. This offensive had two subsidiary goals, maintenance of a rapid operational tempo and defeat of the Japanese surface fleet.

Airplanes and airpower—particularly the Pacific Fleet’s carriers, but also its land-based air forces—were essential to securing the first of these goals. The fast carriers were the engine that drove the fast pace of operations, suppressing Japanese positions, destroying planes and ships, and enabling amphibious landings.<sup>202</sup> Accordingly, the Pacific Fleet organized itself around carrier task forces, because only they could ensure a fast pace of operations.

The second goal, the destruction of the Japanese fleet, required a battle, a tactical component of a larger operation. Even though this was a strategic goal, its tactical nature gave it, appropriately, a secondary priority—carriers, and the operational tempo they enabled, were paramount. This fact limited the opportunities for battle-line commanders to train with their units and develop cohesion, and it led to Lee’s decision to decline a night battle at the Philippine Sea.<sup>203</sup> But the overall rewards justified such decisions.

This outcome contrasts starkly with the opportunities the Japanese lost by inverting the priority of their strategic and tactical planning. They developed a sophisticated tactical doctrine for major fleet action, around which they developed operations and strategy—with predictable, and unfortunate, results.<sup>204</sup>

The success of the U.S. Navy’s approach and the emphasis placed on carrier airpower have overshadowed the important role battleships played in the Navy’s tactical doctrine. The long-awaited clash of battle lines never occurred; this fact, coupled with the dominant role of the carriers in the last eighteen months of the war, has led to the conclusion that battleships were relegated to supporting roles during the Central Pacific offensive.<sup>205</sup> The foregoing analysis has shown this traditional view to be false. Battleships were an essential element of the Navy’s plan for decisive battle and therefore collectively an essential part of the campaign. Every plan for major action developed during the Central Pacific offensive relied on the employment of a battle fleet. In this respect, Spruance, though often considered to have been a “battleship admiral,” was no different from Halsey and Mitscher.<sup>206</sup>

When Halsey and Spruance emphasized concentration, it was the concentration of battleships that concerned them. Spruance always kept the bulk of his battleship strength together: at Makin in the Gilberts, off Kwajalein in the Marshals, in TG 58.3 at Truk, and around Saipan in the Marianas. Halsey, once he knew the avenue of Kurita's approach, quickly moved to mass his battleships. When he went after Ozawa, all the battleships came with him, and when TF 34 reversed course, they all headed south again. It was only after Leyte Gulf and the decisive defeat of Japanese surface units that battleships began to be distributed evenly among the fast carrier groups on a regular basis and moved to supporting roles.<sup>207</sup>

In the immediate postwar period, wartime experience was reviewed, and lessons were compiled into a new series of tactical manuals. The comprehensive, single-volume format of USF 10B was discarded; numerous additions to the core originally adopted from PAC 10 over the course of the war had made the document large and unwieldy. Material from it and other manuals was collected in several new volumes issued in 1946 and 1947: *U.S.F. 2, General Tactical Instructions, United States Fleets*; *U.S.F. 4, Carrier Task Force Tactical Instructions, United States Fleets*; *U.S.F. 5, Surface Action and Tactics, United States Fleets*; and *U.S.F. 15, CIC Instructions, United States Fleets*.<sup>208</sup>

Nimitz, now Chief of Naval Operations, oversaw the issuance of the new manuals. The introduction of USF 5 borrowed directly from PAC 10:

USF 5 is not intended nor shall it be construed as depriving any officer exercising tactical command of authority to issue special instructions to his command. USF 5, however, should make such instructions unnecessary under ordinary circumstances and should minimize them in extraordinary circumstances. The ultimate aim is to obtain essential uniformity without unacceptable sacrifice of flexibility.<sup>209</sup>

The new manuals retained both the doctrines developed before the war that proved effective and those produced during it. They offered tactics for units large and small.<sup>210</sup> The range bands and battle-plan designators first introduced in *Tentative Fleet Dispositions and Battle Plans* of 1930 were reissued in USF 5.<sup>211</sup> Coordinated attacks were still considered effective.<sup>212</sup> The problems of combat with small units, the "minor tactics" first seriously addressed by PAC 10, formed a large part of the new surface warfare manual.<sup>213</sup>

The synthesis of prewar principles and wartime lessons introduced by the Pacific Fleet in 1943 was validated by the successful conclusion of the campaign and defeat of the Imperial Japanese Navy. The new approach enabled employment of fast carrier task forces in a way that allowed a rapid offensive. Detailed operational and tactical plans completed the picture, preparing the Pacific Fleet

to thwart Japanese countermoves and to triumph, even if not as thoroughly as desired, in the decisive battle.

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#### NOTES

I would like to thank Mr. Barry Zerby of the National Archives for his invaluable assistance in locating numerous documents.

1. Edward S. Miller, *War Plan Orange: The U.S. Strategy to Defeat Japan, 1897–1945* (Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1991).
2. A fleet train consisted of supporting auxiliaries and amphibious ships necessary to seize an island base and sustain the fleet in distant waters; see *Blue Fleet Operation Order No. 1*, 1 January 1924, Fleet Problem Microfilm, Records of the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Record Group 38, National Archives [hereafter FPM, RG 38, NA], app. A.
3. These capabilities had been foreshadowed in the Navy's own Fleet Problems, illustrated by the Japanese in their initial offensives, and demonstrated in the famous carrier battles of 1942; see Mark Allen Campbell, "The Influence of Air Power upon the Evolution of Battle Doctrine in the U.S. Navy, 1922–1941" (History Department, University of Massachusetts, master of arts thesis, December 1992); Samuel Eliot Morison, *History of the United States Naval Operations in World War II*, 15 vols. (Boston: Little, Brown, 1984), vol. 3, pp. 80–126, 314–20, 381–86; vol. 4, pp. 33–64, 69–159; and vol. 5, pp. 79–107, 199–224.
4. For the continuity of strategic planning, see Miller, *War Plan Orange*, pp. 331–46.
5. See Trent Hone, "'Give Them Hell!': The US Navy's Night Combat Doctrine and the Campaign for Guadalcanal," *War in History* 13, no. 2 (April 2006), pp. 171–99.
6. Keeping the enemy off balance was an important element of the Navy's doctrine; see Trent Hone, "Building a Doctrine: USN Tactics and Battle Plans in the Interwar Period," *International Journal of Naval History* 1, no. 2 (October 2002), available at [www.ijnhonline.org](http://www.ijnhonline.org).
7. Dominion over the bulk of the island groups was granted to Japan by the Treaty of Versailles; this "mandate" led to the term's application to the islands as a whole. Although Guam in the Marianas was an American possession, it was isolated and quickly seized by the Japanese after the outbreak of war, as anticipated. The Japanese planned to use their positions in the islands to oppose the Pacific Fleet's advance with repeated attacks by airplanes, submarines, and light forces. Attritional battles on the defensive perimeter were expected to enable the main body of the Combined Fleet to challenge the Navy's advance and defeat it in a decisive battle; see David C. Evans and Mark R. Peattie, *Kaigun* (Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1997), pp. 286–91.
8. *Memorandum for Secret Files: Courses of Action Open to Us in a Pacific Campaign, Attack, Capture and Occupation of the Mandated Islands*, Strategic Plans Division Records, Records of the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Record Group 38, National Archives [hereafter SPD, RG 38, NA], box 153, p. 1.
9. Morison, *History*, vol. 7, p. 82.
10. *Preliminary Draft of Campaign—Granite*, Commander-in-Chief, United States Pacific Fleet, 27 December 1943, World War Two Plans, Orders, and Related Documents, Records of the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Record Group 38, National Archives [hereafter WW2 POR, RG 38, NA], box 24. The first quoted phrase appears on page 1, the second on page 2.
11. Thomas Wildenberg, *Gray Steel and Black Oil: Fast Tankers and Replenishment at Sea in the U.S. Navy, 1912–1992* (Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1996), pp. 168–203; Morison, *History*, vol. 7, pp. 100–13; Henry E. Eccles, *Operational Naval Logistics* (Honolulu: Univ. Press of the Pacific, 2003).
12. Although later Fleet Problems involved the use of detached and separated forces, the cohesion of the fleet remained a fundamental assumption; see *Report of Fleet Problem Ten*, 7

May 1930, Fleet Problem Microfilm, General Records of the Department of the Navy, Record Group 80, National Archives [hereafter FPM, RG 80, NA]; *Estimate of the Situation of the Black Fleet, Fleet Problem XVIII*, 15 March 1937, FPM, RG 38, NA; *Fleet Problem XIX—Concept of*, Director of Fleet Training Division, 10 August 1937, FPM, RG 38, NA.

13. The Central Pacific offensive was considered complementary to the continuing operations in the South Pacific; see Thomas B. Buell, *Master of Sea Power: A Biography of Fleet Admiral Ernest J. King* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1980), p. 339.
14. Milan N. Vego, *The Battle for Leyte, 1944: Allied and Japanese Plans, Preparations, and Execution* (Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 2006), p. 286.
15. *Preliminary Draft of Campaign—Granite*, p. 6.
16. Ibid., p. 7.
17. Thomas C. Hone and Trent Hone, *Battle Line: The United States Navy 1919–1939* (Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 2006), pp. 68–89.
18. *Night Search and Attack Operations, Destroyer Tactical Bulletin No. 5-38, Commander Destroyers Battle Force, 1938*, USN Technical Publications, entry 336A, Records of the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Record Group 38, National Archives [hereafter 336A, RG 38, NA], box 129; *Night Search and Attack, DTP 2-40, Commander Destroyers Battle Force, 1940*, 336A, RG 38, NA, box 130; *U.S. Pacific Fleet Tactical Bulletin No. 5-41: Light Forces in Night Search and Attack*, 24 December 1941, Naval Historical Center, World War Two Command File [hereafter NHC, WW2 CF], box 250.
19. Battle-line carriers were successful in numerous Fleet Problems. *Langley* was used this way in Fleet Problem XI; see *United States Fleet Problem XI, 1930*, Report of the Commander in Chief United States Fleet, Adm. W. V. Pratt, U.S.N., 14 July 1930, FPM, RG 80, NA, p. 68. *Langley* and *Saratoga* operated as battle-line carriers in Fleet Problem XIII; see *United States Fleet Problem XIII, 1932*, Report of the Commander-in-Chief United States Fleet, Adm. Frank H. Schofield, 23 May 1932, FPM, RG 38, NA. *Lexington* and *Saratoga* operated together with the main body in Fleet Problem XVIII; see *BLACK Fleet, Narratives of Events, Fleet Problem XVIII*, Commander Battle Force (Commander BLACK Fleet), 11 May 1937, FPM, RG 38, NA; battle plans described the employment of battle-line carriers; see *F.T.P. 188, General Tactical Instructions, United States Navy* [hereafter FTP 188], 1940, NHC, WW2 CF, box 108, pp. 14-1 through 14-27.
20. Battle plans prescribed specific roles for submarines in battle; see FTP 188, pp. 14-1 through 14-27. In Fleet Problems they were occasionally employed this way; see *Report of Fleet Problem XV*, 1 June 1934, FPM, RG 38, NA.
21. *Tentative Fleet Dispositions and Battle Plans, United States Fleet, 1930*, USN and Related Operational, Tactical, and Instructional Publications, entry 337, Records of the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Record Group 38, National Archives [hereafter 337, RG 38, NA], box 108.
22. See Trent Hone, “The Evolution of Fleet Tactical Doctrine in the U.S. Navy, 1922–1941,” *Journal of Military History* 67, no. 4 (October 2003), pp. 1107–48.
23. The number 3 was reserved for pursuit actions, 4 for retirement, 5 for delay, and 6 for withdrawal; see *F.T.P. 142, General Tactical Instructions, United States Navy* [hereafter FTP 142], 1934, NHC, WW2 CF, box 108, p. 235; FTP 188, p. 14-1.
24. D indicated light forces on the defensive; BF meant light forces attacking on both flanks; S and V called for submarine and air attacks, respectively; see FTP 142, p. 235; FTP 188, p. 14-1.
25. FTP 188, pp. 14-4, 14-5, 14-14, 14-15.
26. *U.S.F. 10, Current Tactical Orders and Doctrine, United States Fleet* [hereafter USF 10], 1941, NHC, WW2 CF, box 270, diagram 1, p. 33.
27. See Hone, “Building a Doctrine.”
28. Perhaps the best perspective of the Navy’s views is provided by the comments of Adm. Joseph M. Reeves after Fleet Problem XVI: “The strategy of dividing the White Fleet into two groups each inferior to the Black Fleet is doubtful. . . . It gave Black the opportunity of defeating the White Fleet in detail.” *Fleet*

*Problem Sixteen, Report of Commander-in-Chief, United States Fleet, USS Pennsylvania, Flagship*, 15 September 1935, FPM, RG 38, NA, p. 20.

29. See Hone, "The Evolution of Fleet Tactical Doctrine in the U.S. Navy, 1922–1941."

30. Submarines were given roles in battle plans; see FTP 188, pp. 14-1 through 14-27. Mine-layers were also to be used; see *Tentative War Instructions for Light Mine Layers*, 1 November 1923, entry 178, RG 38, NA, box 1.

31. Harris Laning, *An Admiral's Yarn*, ed. Mark Russell Shulman et al. (Newport, R.I.: Naval War College Press, 1999), app. 2, "The Naval Battle," May 1933, p. 414.

32. See Hone, "The Evolution of Fleet Tactical Doctrine in the U.S. Navy, 1922–1941."

33. See Hone and Hone, *Battle Line*, pp. 86–87.

34. Numerous prewar battle plans involved the close cooperation of submarines and the surface fleet; see FTP 188, pp. 14-1 through 14-27; *U.S.F. 10, Current Tactical Orders and Doctrine, United States Fleet*, 1934, NHC, WW2 CF, box 270; *U.S.F. 10, Current Tactical Orders, United States Fleet*, 1938, NHC, WW2 CF, box 270.

35. See Hone, "'Give Them Hell!'"

36. See *ibid.*

37. See *ibid.* Also, *Secret Information Bulletin No. 5: Battle Experience Solomon Island Actions, December 1942–January 1943*, Naval War College Archives, Manuscript Collection 207, box 1, folder 8, chap. 31.

38. The redundancy and inconsistency were plain to Nimitz's staff; see *Revision of Pacific Fleet Cruising Instructions*, Pacific Board to Revise Cruising Instructions, 18 May 1943, WW2 POR, RG 38, NA, box 22, p. 1. For a sampling of tactical bulletins, see *U.S. Pacific Fleet Tactical Bulletin No. 3-41: Battle Plans*, 21 November 1941, NHC, WW2 CF, box 250; *U.S. Pacific Fleet Tactical Bulletin No. 4-41: Tentative Fleet Dispositions*, 5 December 1941, entry 107, Record Group 313, Records of the Naval Operating Forces, National Archives [hereafter 107, RG 313, NA], box 6543; *U.S. Pacific Fleet Tactical Bulletin No. 5-41: Light Forces in Night Search and Attack*, 24 December 1941, 107, RG 313, NA, box 6543; *U.S. Pacific Fleet Tactical Bulletin No. 6-41: Radar Doctrine, U.S. Pacific Fleet*, 31 December 1941, NHC WW2 CF, box 250; *U.S. Pacific Fleet Tactical Bulletin No. 2-42 (Revised): Instructions for Fueling at Sea*, 28 August 1942, 107, RG 313, NA, box 6543; *U.S. Pacific Fleet Tactical Bulletin No. 4TB-42: Pacific Fleet Radar Doctrine*, 26 November 1942, 107, RG 313, NA, box 6543; *U.S. Pacific Fleet Tactical Bulletin No. 5TB-42: Light Forces in Night Search and Attack*, 14 November 1942, 107, RG 313, NA, box 6543. For a sampling of confidential letters, see *Pacific Fleet Confidential Letter 12CL-41: Instructions for Escort Commanders and Commanding Officers of Escort Vessels*, 107, RG 313, NA, box 6593; *Pacific Fleet Confidential Letter 29CL-42: Damage Control and Rescue, Lessons Regarding*, 107, RG 313, NA, box 6593; *Pacific Fleet Confidential Letter 32CL-42: Command Relationships—Task Force and Task Group Commanders*, 107, RG 313, NA, box 6593; *Pacific Fleet Confidential Letter 33CL-42: Rangefinder Calibration—Procedure for*, 107, RG 313, NA, box 6593.

39. John B. Lundstrom, *Black Shoe Carrier Admiral: Frank Jack Fletcher at Coral Sea, Midway, and Guadalcanal* (Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 2006), pp. 497–99.

40. The large carriers were on opposite sides in Fleet Problems IX, X, XI, XIII, XV, XVI, XVII, and part of XIX. They operated on the same side in Problems XII and XIV but in separate task forces. In Problem XVIII, they were together but tied to the main body; see Campbell, "Influence of Air Power," pp. 214–17; *United States Fleet Problem XII, 1931, Report of the Commander in Chief United States Fleet*, Adm. J. V. Chase, U.S.N., 1 April 1931, FPM, RG 38, NA; *United States Fleet, Problem XIV, Report of the Commander-in-Chief, United States Fleet*, Adm. R. H. Leigh, 10 April 1933, FPM, RG 80, NA.

41. Campbell, "Influence of Air Power," p. 174; Lundstrom, *Black Shoe Carrier Admiral*, pp. 497–98.

42. Carrier task forces were generally formed around three fast carriers, with two large fleet carriers and one small light carrier being the norm; see Clark G. Reynolds, *The Fast Carriers: The Forging of an Air Navy* (Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1992), pp. 75–76.

43. Campbell, "Influence of Air Power," pp. 147–48.

44. *Revision of Pacific Fleet Cruising Instructions*, p. 1.

45. Morison, *History*, vol. 7, pp. 334, 336.

46. Ibid., vol. 13, p. 318.

47. *Revision of Pacific Fleet Cruising Instructions*, p. 1.

48. Morison, *History*, vol. 3, p. 160.

49. *Historic World War II: USS Washington BB56 Battleship*, bb56.com.

50. *Current Tactical Orders and Doctrine, U.S. Pacific Fleet, P.A.C. 10* [hereafter PAC 10], Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet, June 1943, 337, RG 38, NA, box 61, p. IV-2.

51. Ibid., figs. 6, 7, and 8.

52. *U.S. Pacific Fleet Tactical Bulletin No. 5-41: Light Forces in Night Search and Attack*; 24 December 1941, 107, RG 313, NA, box 6543; *U.S. Pacific Fleet Tactical Bulletin No. 5TB-42: Light Forces in Night Search and Attack*; PAC 10, figs. 9 and 10.

53. An excellent example of the prior method is the plan for night action developed by Rear Adm. Thomas C. Kinkaid before the battle of Tassafaronga: *Operation Plan No. 1-42*, Commander Task Force Sixty-seven, 27 November 1942, World War Two Action and Operational Reports, Records of the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Record Group 38, National Archives [hereafter WW2 AOR, RG 38, NA], box 241; Rear Adm. Norman Scott's plans are also noteworthy: *Memorandum for Task Group Sixty-four Point Two*, Norman Scott, Commander Task Force Sixty-four, 9 October 1942, WW2 AOR, RG 38, NA, box 19.

54. PAC 10, p. v.

55. *Current Tactical Orders and Doctrine, U.S. Fleet, U.S.F. 10A* [hereafter USF 10A], Commander-in-Chief, United States Fleet, 1 February 1944, WW2 Bates—Leyte Collection, Records of the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Record Group 38, National Archives [hereafter Bates, RG 38, NA], box 16.

56. Compare, for example, PAC 10, part IV, with USF 10A, part IV.

57. Compare, for example, USF 10, 1941, with USF 10A.

58. *Current Tactical Orders and Doctrine, U.S. Fleet, U.S.F. 10B*, Commander-in-Chief, United States Fleet, 1 May 1945, National Archives Microfilm NRS 1977-44.

59. Morison, *History*, vol. 7, p. 82.

60. Ibid., p. 86.

61. Ibid., p. 91.

62. *Operational Experience of Fast Carrier Task Forces in World War II*, WSEG Staff Study No. 4, Office of the Secretary of Defense, Weapons Systems Evaluation Group, Washington D.C., 15 August 1951 (copy provided to the author by Dr. Thomas C. Hone), pp. 153–55.

63. *Report of Fleet Problem XV*.

64. *Secret Information Bulletin No. 2: Battle Experience Solomon Islands Actions, August and September 1942*, United States Fleet, Headquarters of the Commander-in-Chief, 1 March 1943, Record Group 334, Records of Interservice Agencies, National Archives [hereafter RG 334, NA], box 443, chap. 11.

65. Nimitz and Spruance expected the Japanese to oppose the movement into the Central Pacific with the bulk of their fleet; see Reynolds, *Fast Carriers*, pp. 79–80.

66. *Operation Plan A2-43*, Commander Task Force 54 (Fifth Amphibious Force), 23 October 1943, WW2 POR, RG 38, NA, box 161.

67. *Operation Plan 3-43*, Commander Fifth Fleet (Central Pacific Force), 24 October 1943, WW2 POR, RG 38, NA, box 59.

68. *CATCHPOLE—Outline Plan*, Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet and Pacific Ocean Areas, SPD, RG 38, NA, box 137, p. 39.

69. *GALVANIC Operation—General Instructions for*, Commander Central Pacific Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet, 29 October 1943, WW2 POR, RG 38, NA, box 59, p. 1.

70. *Possible modifications in plans for GALVANIC*, Commander Central Pacific Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet, 28 October 1943, WW2 POR, RG 38, NA, box 59.

71. These three ships were the last of the old battleships to undergo major modifications before the war, and they escaped the attack on Pearl Harbor. They received additional deck armor and updated fire control systems,

making them the most capable of the old battleships at the time of Operation GALVANIC; see Norman Friedman, *US Battleships: An Illustrated Design History* (Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1985), pp. 201–203; *Fire Control Installations*, Postgraduate School, U.S. Naval Academy, 1939, Naval Historical Center Library, Washington, D.C. A fourth battleship in the Northern Attack Force, *Pennsylvania*, was operating as flagship for Rear Adm. Richmond K. Turner, commander of the assault forces, and was not included in Spruance's major action plan; see *Operation Plan 3-43*, Commander Fifth Fleet.

72. *Operation Plan 3-43*, Commander Fifth Fleet.

73. *Operation Plan 1-43*, Commander Central Pacific Force (Fifth Fleet), 25 October 1943, WW2 POR, RG 38, NA, box 59.

74. Ibid., p. 9.

75. During the approach to the Gilberts, the amphibious forces, before identifying the carrier forces as friendly, assumed they were Japanese and formed a line of battle. Although no plan exists for northern forces in the GALVANIC operation to form a battle line, there is no doubt they would have done so if required; see Morison, *History*, vol. 7, p. 120. Admiral Lee was designated commander, battle line; see *Operation Plan 3-43*, Commander Fifth Fleet.

76. *Operation Plan 3-43*, Commander Fifth Fleet.

77. Ibid.

78. *GALVANIC Operation—General Instructions for*, p. 1.

79. *Imperial Japanese Navy Page*, [www.combinedfleet.com](http://www.combinedfleet.com).

80. Ibid.

81. Morison, *History*, vol. 6, p. 323.

82. Ibid., vol. 7, pp. 201–203.

83. *Battle Plan No. 1*, Commander, Support Unit (Commander Cruiser Division Six), 29 November 1943, WW2 POR, RG 38, NA, box 260.

84. Morison, *History*, vol. 7, p. 203.

85. Ibid., p. 206.

86. Reynolds, *Fast Carriers*, p. 103.

87. *Operation Plan No. 1-44*, Commander Central Pacific Force (Fifth Fleet), 6 January 1944, WW2 POR, RG 38, NA, box 60, p. 14.

88. Morison, *History*, vol. 7, p. 218.

89. Previous fast battleships were limited to 27.5 knots; see Friedman, *US Battleships*, pp. 447–49. For the task force breakdown, see *Operation Plan No. 1-44*, Commander Central Pacific Force.

90. Miller, *War Plan Orange*, pp. 286–312.

91. *Operation Plan 2-44*, Commander Fifth Fleet (Central Pacific Force), 6 January 1944. Spruance planned to use the old battleships in spite of the fact that they carried mostly bombardment ammunition; see *Operation Plan No. 1-44*, Commander Central Pacific Force, p. 12.

92. *Deployment and Battle Plan*, Commander Support Group (Commander Cruiser Division Six), 9 November 1943, WW2 POR, RG 38, NA, box 260; *Operation Plan 2-44*, Commander Fifth Fleet, p. H-5.

93. *Operation Plan 2-44*, Commander Fifth Fleet, p. H-5.

94. Ibid., p. H-1.

95. *Operational Experience of Fast Carrier Task Forces in World War II*, pp. 162–64.

96. Ibid., p. 162; Morison, *History*, vol. 7, p. 353.

97. *Engagement off Truk, 16 February 1944—Report of*, Commanding Officer, U.S.S. *Iowa*, 26 February 1944, WW2 AOR, RG 38, NA, box 556.

98. Battleship Division 7 was frequently considered as a pursuit element; see *Operation Order 3-44*, Battleship Division Seven (Task Group 34.5), 7 October 1944, WW2 POR, RG 38, NA, box 232; *Operation Order No. 5-45*, Battleship Division Seven (Task Unit 58.4.2), 31 March 1945, WW2 POR, RG 38, NA, box 232.

99. Task Group 50.9 faced similar difficulties; although the destroyers and battleships had operated together in FLINTLOCK, the cruisers *Minneapolis* and *New Orleans* had been part of the assault forces during the attack on Kwajalein; see Morison, *History*, vol. 7, p. 344. The battleships and destroyers had all been part of Task Group 58.3; see *Operation Plan No. 1-44*, Commander Central Pacific Force.

100. Morison, *History*, vol. 7, p. 319.

101. Ibid., vol. 8, p. 36.

102. Ibid., p. 61.

103. Ibid., p. 36.

104. Ibid.

105. *Operation Plan 5-44*, Commander Fast Carrier Task Force, Pacific (Task Force 58), 9 April 1944, WW2 POR, RG 38, NA, box 235, annex H, Operation Plan A.

106. *Operation Plan 1-44*, Commander Battleships, Pacific Fleet, 12 April 1944, WW2 POR, RG 38, NA, box 224.

107. *Operation Plan 5-44*, Commander Fast Carrier Task Force, annex H, Operation Plan A.

108. Ibid., Operation Plan B.

109. Ibid., Operation Plan C.

110. Morison, *History*, vol. 8, pp. 160–61; *Operation Plan 10-44*, Commander Fifth Fleet (Commander Central Pacific Force), 12 May 1944, WW2 POR, RG 38, NA, box 61, p. 23.

111. *Secret Information Bulletin No. 20: Battle Experience, Supporting Operations for the Capture of the Marianas Islands (Saipan, Guam, and Tinian), June–August 1944*, United States Fleet, Headquarters of the Commander-in-Chief, 21 December 1944, RG 334, NA, box 444, p. 74–23.

112. *Operation Plan 12-44*, Commander Fifth Fleet (Task Force 50), 11 May 1944, WW2 POR, RG 38, NA, box 61; *Operation Plan 3-43*, Commander Fifth Fleet; *Operation Plan 2-44*, Commander Fifth Fleet.

113. *Operation Plan 12-44*, Commander Fifth Fleet; *Operation Plan A10-44*, Commander Task Force 51 (Commander Fifth Amphibious Force), 6 May 1944, WW2 POR, RG 38, NA, box 166, annex S.

114. *Operation Plan 10-44*, Commander Fifth Fleet, p. 21.

115. The plan called for strikes to start on 12 June; see *ibid.*, annex G, p. G-1. Explanation of the advanced date is from *Secret Information Bulletin No. 20*, p. 74–7.

116. *Operation Plan 10-44*, Commander Fifth Fleet, pp. 12–13.

117. Quoted in Morison, *History*, vol. 8, p. 221.

118. Morison, *History*, vol. 8, pp. 216, 233.

119. *Redfin* reported the sortie of Ozawa's force from Tawi Tawi on 13 June, *Flying Fish* spotted the Japanese as they left San Bernardino on 15 June, and *Seahorse* reported the advance of the Japanese southern group the same day, although its radio was jammed until early the next morning; see *ibid.*, pp. 237–41.

120. *Operation Plan 12-44*, Commander Fifth Fleet, p. J-4.

121. Ibid.

122. Morison, *History*, vol. 8, p. 242.

123. *Operations of Task Force Fifty-eight 11 June through 21 June 1944*, Commander Task Force Fifty-eight, 11 September 1944, WW2 AOR, RG 38, NA, box 215, pp. 12–13.

124. Morison, *History*, vol. 8, p. 415.

125. *Operations of Task Force Fifty-eight 11 June through 21 June 1944*, p. 14.

126. Ibid., p. 17.

127. Ibid.

128. Because the carrier task forces were the standard organization, Lee never had the ability to drill his battle fleet; see Reynolds, *Fast Carriers*, p. 126.

129. In November 1942 Lee took an ad hoc task force consisting of *Washington*, *South Dakota*, and four destroyers into the darkness off Guadalcanal. There had been no opportunity to train beforehand. Two destroyers were lost, the other two were disabled, and *South Dakota* was crippled by electrical problems and enemy fire; see Morison, *History*, vol. 5, pp. 270–82.

130. Lee's battleships came from Task Groups 58.2 and 58.3. His cruisers and destroyers were from the assault forces, Task Forces 52 and 53; see Morison, *History*, vol. 8, apps. II and III; *Operation Plan 12-44*, Commander Fifth Fleet; *Operation Plan 10-44*, Commander Fifth Fleet.

131. *Report of Night Action, Task Force Sixty-four—November 14–15, 1942*, Commander Task Force Sixty-four, n.d. (copy provided to the author by Mr. Keith Allan), p. 8.

132. *Operations of Task Force Fifty-eight 11 June through 21 June 1944*, p. 17.

133. Ibid.

134. For the traditional interpretation, see Morison, *History*, vol. 8, p. 244.

135. *Research on Striking Force Tactics*, Yokosuka Naval Air Group, 10 May 1943 (copy provided to author by Mr. David Dickson).

136. Ibid., p. 3.

137. Morison, *History*, vol. 8, p. 253.

138. *Operations of Task Force Fifty-eight 11 June through 21 June 1944*, p. 13.

139. Ibid., p. 19.

140. Ibid., p. 20.

141. Morison, *History*, vol. 8, pp. 257–304.

142. *Operations of Task Force Fifty-eight 11 June through 21 June 1944*, p. 28.

143. Morison, *History*, vol. 8, pp. 278–82.

144. Ibid., vol. 12, p. 12.

145. Ibid., pp. 11–16.

146. Vego, *Battle for Leyte*, pp. 255–99, 335–36.

147. *Operation Plan 8-44*, CINCPOA, 27 September 1944, quoted in Vego, *Battle for Leyte*, p. 126.

148. *Battle Plan No. 1-44*, Commander Third Fleet, 9 September 1944, WW2 POR, RG 38, NA, box 57, p. 1. Note that this plan covered Third Fleet operations prior to Leyte. The raids of September 1944 were governed by this plan as well.

149. Ibid., pp. 1–2, 18–19.

150. Ibid., annex A, p. 2.

151. Ibid., p. 2.

152. Vego, *Battle for Leyte*, pp. 155–60; Morison, *History*, vol. 12, p. 196.

153. Vego, *Battle for Leyte*, pp. 155–60; Morison, *History*, vol. 12, p. 196.

154. Morison, *History*, vol. 12, pp. 426–27.

155. Vego, *Battle for Leyte*, p. 100.

156. Ibid., p. 10.

157. Ibid., p. 49.

158. Ibid., p. 197.

159. Kuasaka issued the order because Toyoda was on Formosa, with limited access to communication; see *ibid.*, pp. 161–62, 212; Richard W. Bates, *The Battle for Leyte Gulf, October 1944, Strategical and Tactical Analysis*, vol. 3, *Operations from 0000 October 20th (D-Day) until 1042 October 23rd* (Newport, R.I.: Naval War College, Bureau of Naval Personnel, 1957), Bates, RG 38, NA, box 3, p. 150.

160. Bates, *Battle for Leyte Gulf*, vol. 3, p. 397.

161. Morison, *History*, vol. 12, pp. 230–31, 430–31.

162. Vego, *Battle for Leyte*, pp. 227–29.

163. Morison, *History*, vol. 12, p. 430.

164. Bates, *Battle for Leyte Gulf*, vol. 3, pp. 106, 567.

165. Ibid., p. 569.

166. Vego, *Battle for Leyte*, p. 221.

167. Bates, *Battle for Leyte Gulf*, vol. 3, pp. 769–72.

168. *Action Report—Period 23–26 October 1944, both dates inclusive*, Commander Third Fleet, 13 November 1944, Bates, RG 38, NA, box 10, p. 2; Bates, *Battle for Leyte Gulf*, vol. 3, pp. 771–72.

169. Vego, *Battle for Leyte*, pp. 257–59.

170. *Report of Operations of Task Force Thirty-four during the Period 6 October 1944 to 3 November 1944*, Commander Task Force Thirty-four, 14 December 1944, WW2 AOR, RG 38, NA, box 135, p. 5; Richard W. Bates, *The Battle for Leyte Gulf, October 1944, Strategical and Tactical Analysis*, vol. 5, *Battle of Surigao Strait, October 24th–25th* (Newport, R.I.: Naval War College, Bureau of Naval Personnel, 1958) (copy provided to author by Mr. Anthony Lazzaretti), p. 169.

171. Bates, *Battle for Leyte Gulf*, vol. 3, p. 98.

172. *Action Report—Period 23–26 October 1944*, p. 5.

173. *Ibid.; Secret Information Bulletin No. 22: Battle Experience, Battle for Leyte Gulf: A) Battle of Surigao Strait, B) Battle off Samar, C) Battle of Cape Engano, 23–27 October 1944*, United States Fleet, Headquarters of the Commander-in-Chief, 1 March 1945, RG 334, NA, box 445, pp. 78–13 and 78–14; Vego, *Battle for Leyte*, p. 278. Not all of Halsey's subordinates agreed with this decision; see David Hamer, *Bombers versus Battleships* (Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1998), p. 279.

174. *Report of Operations of Task Force Thirty-four during the Period 6 October 1944 to 3 November 1944*, p. 8; Morison, *History*, vol. 12, pp. 318–19.

175. *Report of Operations of Task Force Thirty-four during the Period 6 October 1944 to 3 November 1944*, pp. 9–10; Morison, *History*, vol. 12, pp. 318–19.

176. One additional destroyer was added; see Morison, *History*, vol. 12, pp. 318–19.

177. Ibid., pp. 331–32.

178. Ibid., pp. 322–28.

179. Ibid., pp. 332–34.

180. *Operation Plan 13-44*, Commander Task Force Seventy-seven, 26 September 1944, WW2 POR, RG 38, NA, box 66, app. 2, annex E.

181. Morison, *History*, vol. 7, p. 346; vol. 8, p. 409; vol. 12, pp. 416, 419.

182. Ibid., vol. 8, p. 406. Australian ships served under Berkey; see *ibid.*, vol. 12, p. 421.

183. *Operation Plan 13-44*, Commander Task Force Seventy-seven, app. 2, annex E.

184. Bates, *Battle for Leyte Gulf*, vol. 5, pp. 99–102.

185. Ibid., p. 122.

186. Ibid., p. 124.

187. USF 10A, p. 4-12.

188. Bates, *Battle for Leyte Gulf*, vol. 5, pp. 352–77.

189. Ibid., pp. 236–38.

190. See Trent Hone, “Triumph of U.S. Navy Night Fighting,” *Naval History* 20, no. 5 (October 2006), pp. 54–59.

191. For details of the action, see Morison, *History*, vol. 12, pp. 242–88.

192. Bates, *Battle for Leyte Gulf*, vol. 5, p. 675.

193. *Report of Operations of Task Force Thirty-four during the Period 6 October 1944 to 3 November 1944*, p. 11. For plans concerning Task Group 34.5 and its operation, see *Operation Order 13-44*, Commander Battleships, Pacific Fleet (Task Force 34), 6 October 1944, WW2 POR, RG 38, NA, box 224.

194. *Action Report of San Bernardino Strait—Night Action by Task Group 34.5 on 25–26 October 1944*, Commander Task Group Thirty Four Point Five, 7 November 1944, WW2 AOR, RG 38, NA, box 136, p. 2; USF 10A, p. 4-11.

195. *Action Report of San Bernardino Strait*, Commander Task Group Thirty Four Point Five, p. 2.

196. Thomas C. Hone, with Trent C. Hone, “The Pacific Naval War as One Coherent Campaign, 1941–1945,” *International Journal of Naval History* 2, no. 2 (August 2003), available at [www.ijnhonline.org](http://www.ijnhonline.org).

197. *Operation Order No. 10-44*, Commander Battleships, Pacific Fleet, 26 August 1944, WW2 POR, RG 38, NA, box 224; *Operation Order 13-44*; *Operation Order 19-44*, Commander Battleship Squadron Two (Commander Task Force 34), 15 December 1944, WW2 POR, RG 38, NA, box 224.

198. *Operation Order 3-44*; *Operation Order 4-44*, Commander Battleship Division Seven, 12 November 1944, WW2 POR, RG 38, NA, box 232; *Operation Order 5-44*, Commander Battleship Division Seven, 8 December 1944, WW2 POR, RG 38, NA, box 232; *Operation Plan No. 1-45*, Commander Battleship Division Seven, 10 March 1945, WW2 POR, RG 38, NA, box 232; *Operation Order No. 2-45*, Commander Battleship Division Seven, 6 February 1945, WW2 POR, RG 38, NA, box 232; *Operation Order No. 3-45*, Commander Battleship Division Seven, 12 March 1945, WW2 POR, RG 38, NA, box 232; *Operation Order No. 5-45*; *Operation Order No. 8-45*, Commander Battleship Division Seven, 17 May 1945, WW2 POR, RG 38, NA, box 232; *Operation Order No. 2-45*, Commander Battleship Division Eight, 4 May 1945, WW2 POR, RG 38, NA, box 232; *Operation Plan No. 1-45*, Commander Battleship Division Three, 23 January 1945, WW2 POR, RG 38, NA, box 229; *Battle Plan No. 1-45*, Commander Battleship Division Three, 26 January 1945, WW2 POR, RG 38, NA, box 229; *Operation Plan No. 2-45*, Commander Battleship Division Three, 30 January 1945, WW2 POR, RG 38, NA, box 229; *Battle Plan No. 1-44*, Commander Task Group Fifty-two Point Eight (Commander Cruiser Division Six), 21 January 1944, WW2 POR, RG 38, NA, box 260.

199. The other way in which the Japanese attempted to address the deficiency was the use of suicide tactics.

200. Halsey considered leaving Task Force 34 alone off the San Bernardino Strait but without air cover. This would have been a poor choice, and he appropriately dismissed it. Leaving Task Force 34 with Task Group 38.2,

a more realistic option, was never seriously considered; see *Action Report—Period 23–26 October 1944*, p. 5. Halsey had developed no plans for dispersal of his fighting strength; see *Battle Plan No. 1-44*, Commander Third Fleet.

201. Quoted in Reynolds, *Fast Carriers*, pp. 279–80.
202. Reynolds, *Fast Carriers*, p. 141.
203. *Operations of Task Force Fifty-eight 11 June through 21 June 1944*, p. 17.
204. Haruo Tohmatsu and H. P. Willmott, *A Gathering Darkness: The Coming of War to the Far East and the Pacific, 1921–1942* (New York: SR Books, 2004), p. 42.
205. Reynolds, *Fast Carriers*, pp. 166–67.
206. Ibid., p. 166.
207. The battleships were in three groups for the Mindoro landings in December 1944, the assault on Okinawa, and attacks on Japan in July–August 1945. This distribution contrasts with the concentration into two groups for

the Gilberts, Hollandia, Marianas, and Leyte; see *Operational Experience of Fast Carrier Task Forces in World War II*, pp. 189, 206; Morison, *History*, vol. 14, pp. 382–85.

208. *U.S.F. 2, General Tactical Instructions, United States Fleets*, Navy Department, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, 1947, Bates, RG 38, NA, box 11; *U.S.F. 4, Carrier Task Force Tactical Instructions, United States Fleets*, Navy Department, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, 1946, Bates, RG 38, NA, box 11; *U.S.F. 5, Surface Action and Tactics, United States Fleets*, Navy Department, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, 1947, Bates, RG 38, NA, box 12; *U.S.F. 15, CIC Instructions, United States Fleets*, Navy Department, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, 1947, Bates, RG 38, NA, box 17.
209. *U.S.F. 5, Surface Action and Tactics*, p. III.
210. Ibid.
211. Ibid., app. I.
212. Ibid., pp. 3–23.
213. Ibid., chap. 4.



# LEARNING THE HARD WAY

## Force Protection 1983–2000

*Lieutenant Commander John Callaway, U.S. Navy*

*Since the attack on Khobar Towers in June 1996, the Department of Defense (DoD) has made significant improvements in protecting its service members, mainly in deterring, disrupting and mitigating terrorist attacks on installations. The attack on USS Cole (DDG 67), in the port of Aden, Yemen, on 12 October 2000, demonstrated a seam in the fabric of efforts to protect our forces, namely in-transit forces.*

USS COLE COMMISSION REPORT, EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The October 2000 terrorist attack on the guided-missile destroyer USS *Cole* (DDG 67) in the port of Aden, Yemen, is commonly viewed in the larger context of al-Qa‘ida’s September 11th campaign. Beyond the initial official investigations, the military force-protection context of the attack has largely been overlooked as analysts have traced the movements of al-Qa‘ida operatives who were traversing the globe at the time. But the proper context of the *Cole* bombing is a series of terrorist attacks against U.S. military forces abroad that started in 1983.

The 1983 Beirut bombings, the Khobar Towers attack in 1996, and the *Cole* attack in 2000 have striking similarities, though their perpetrators were different. A comparison of these three cases highlights three trends concerning organizational learning in the military about force protection: organizational change

*Lieutenant Commander John Callaway is the commanding officer of USS Scout (MCM 8) and Mine Countermeasures Crew Dominant. Selected as the Navy’s 2005 Politico-Military Scholar, he graduated from Harvard’s John F. Kennedy School of Government with a master’s degree in 2007. He served previously, among other assignments, as operations officer in the USS Chancellorsville (CG 62) and USS Benfold (DDG 65), and action officer in the Politico-Military Affairs Division (N525) of the Navy Staff.*

(command and control), intelligence support, and recognition of the threat. This article assesses, on the basis of the investigations conducted after the attacks, what the military has learned about force protection, and how well.<sup>1</sup>

These three cases are illuminating with respect to casualties suffered and lessons learned. They also illustrate the military’s organizational change over time with respect to the three underlying themes. By the late

1990s (see figure 1), the military had acknowledged that command-and-control structures were inadequate in the Beirut barracks and Khobar Towers bombings and had begun to address them formally. Second, it had learned that while relevant intelligence was collected, analyzed, and disseminated, warnings went unheeded in both earlier cases. Third, the military's understanding of the terrorist threat was by that time evolving from the relative ignorance of the 1980s to dim

**FIGURE 1**  
**MILITARY LEARNING AFTER THE 1983 AND 1996 ATTACKS**

	Beirut Barracks	Khobar Towers	USS <i>Cole</i>
Command-and-control outcome	Goldwater-Nichols Act	Force-protection staff creation	?
Intelligence failure? <sup>a</sup>	No	No	?
Definition of terrorism	Accident	War	?

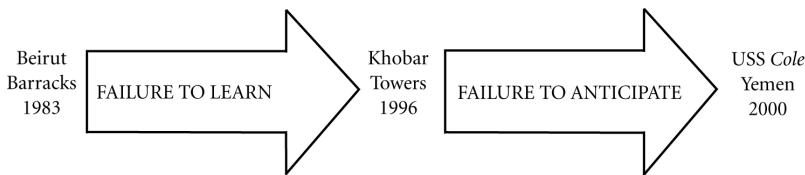
a. "Intelligence failure" is defined as "systematic organizational surprise resulting from incorrect, missing, discarded, or inadequate hypotheses." Robert Johnston, *Analytic Culture in the U.S. Intelligence Community* (Washington, D.C.: Center for the Study of Intelligence, Central Intelligence Agency, 2005), p. 6.

recognition. More generally, and as depicted in figure 2, the 1996 Khobar Towers bombing represented a "failure to learn" from the 1983 Beirut barracks attack.<sup>2</sup> The 2000 *Cole* bombing, in contrast, was a "failure to anticipate" the next attack despite having learned the lessons of Beirut.

April 2008 marked the twenty-fifth anniversary of the 1983 bombing of the American embassy in Beirut, Lebanon. The embassy was destroyed by a car bomb in that attack, and sixty-one people were killed.<sup>3</sup> The embassy's vulnerability in the April attack pointed to the vulnerability of U.S. military forces in Lebanon. Indeed, the 1983 terrorist bombing that most people remember is the attack on the U.S. Marine barracks at the Beirut International Airport in October. A battalion of Marines was ashore on a peacekeeping mission. Two hundred twenty of its Marines plus another twenty-one military personnel were killed by a truck bomb that exploded with the force of twelve thousand pounds of TNT.

The October attack exposed severe problems in command and control, specifically the lack of authority of the regional commander in chief (as today's combatant commanders were then known) over the Marines on the ground. It also revealed micromanagement by Washington of military actions in Lebanon

**FIGURE 2**  
**MILITARY FAILURES IN TERRORISM**



through a bloated chain of command that stretched from the Pentagon to the field.<sup>4</sup> These faults contributed to the impetus for the Goldwater-Nichols Defense Reorganization Act of 1986.<sup>5</sup>

The investigations that followed the 1983 attacks also raised questions about the effectiveness of intelligence. At the strategic level, the terrorist threat had already been widely understood, and the bombing of the embassy in April clearly had indicated its seriousness. The next month, five months before the attack on the barracks, a team surveyed intelligence support for the Marine peacekeepers at the tactical level. It reported that much intelligence was available but that there were problems in coordination of reporting and analysis.<sup>6</sup> No action was taken on the report.

Between the survey in May and the October bombing, attacks on the Marine peacekeepers escalated from sniping to heavy rockets and artillery; the Marines received “over 100 intelligence reports warning of terrorist car bomb attacks.”<sup>7</sup> Yet still no action was taken on the survey’s recommendations. After the attack, the Director of Naval Intelligence reviewed the intelligence data available before the bombing and concluded, “The chances were pretty good we would have been able to predict [the attack].”<sup>8</sup> Tactically, intelligence had been available but not had not been prioritized or tailored to support force protection.

The official Department of Defense investigation of the attack, known as the Long Commission, identified a lack of antiterrorist human intelligence (HUMINT) as contributing to the vulnerability of the Marines. Specific threats, though received in high volume, “seldom materialized.”<sup>9</sup> Additional human-intelligence capability was needed to prioritize and determine the credibility of those threats and then exploit any leads developed in the network of sources. This type of fully integrated intelligence plan provides commanders on the ground a clearer picture of what they can actually expect.

The Long Commission also specifically investigated “terrorism as a mode of warfare.”<sup>10</sup> In 1983, terrorism was not considered a form of warfare, and the *Joint Chiefs of Staff Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms* did not (per Locher)

define it. In fact, the cause initially listed for those killed in the bombing was “accidental death.”<sup>11</sup> The commission argued, however, that “the systematic, carefully orchestrated terrorism which we see in the Middle East today represents a new dimension of warfare.” Whatever the formal definition, however, a senior European Command officer commented that commanders on the ground in Lebanon “neglect[ed] their responsibility for security of their personnel in high-threat areas, against repeated, proven attack capabilities.”<sup>12</sup>

In November 1995, terrorists bombed the office of a State Department-run program in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, killing five American military personnel. In a remarkable parallel to the Beirut attacks, seven months later the terrorists struck again in the same country, with greater force and against a military target. This time terrorists struck Khobar Towers, a U.S. Air Force barracks in Dhahran. The facility housed American and allied personnel supporting Operation SOUTHERN WATCH, the coalition enforcement of the no-fly zone then established over southern Iraq. This attack, delivered by a truck bomb on 25 June 1996, killed nineteen airmen and wounded approximately five hundred.<sup>13</sup>

The Khobar Towers bombing, thirteen years after the Beirut attack and nearly ten after passage of the Goldwater-Nichols Act, again shocked the U.S. military. Goldwater-Nichols had given regional combatant commanders authority to match their responsibility to forces in the field. However, their staffs had still lacked an organizational focus on terrorism. Therefore, the Joint Chiefs of Staff created an office, known as J-34, to deal with antiterrorist and force-protection matters, and corresponding offices took shape at the lower echelons of command.<sup>14</sup>

In the Khobar Towers case intelligence information had once again been available, if not specific. The Downing Assessment Task Force was created to investigate the attack. Its Finding 7 states, “Intelligence provided warning of the terrorist threat to U.S. forces in Saudi Arabia.” Senator Arlen Specter, chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, declared after his committee conducted its own investigation, “There was no failure of intelligence, but a failure to use intelligence.”<sup>15</sup> However, the Downing assessment did lament the lack of HUMINT capability: “Human intelligence . . . is probably the only source of information that can provide tactical details of a terrorist attack. The U.S. intelligence community must have the requisite authorities and invest more time, people, and funds into developing HUMINT against the terrorist threat.”<sup>16</sup>

In marked contrast to conventional wisdom at the time of the Beirut bombing and even to the tentative language of the Long Commission, the Downing task force asserted flatly that “terrorism . . . is a form of warfare.”<sup>17</sup> Indeed, the first opinion expressed in the Downing assessment articulated a new

understanding of the terrorist threat, declaring terrorism to be “AN UNDECLARED WAR ON THE UNITED STATES.”<sup>18</sup> The Downing task force also recommended command-and-control changes and identified intelligence lessons. Some of the lessons repeated the Long Commission’s findings. Some lessons were new. But some lessons were still to come.

### **USS COLE**

On 10 October 2000, *Cole* transited the Suez Canal en route to the Persian Gulf, where the ship was to enforce the United Nations sanctions against Iraq and keep its Tomahawk land-attack cruise missiles ready for possible use by the Commander, U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM). On 11 October 2000 *Cole* passed southward through the Red Sea at twenty-seven knots. The next day, the 12th, the ship entered Aden and tied up alongside a dolphin, a pierlike structure of concrete pilings in the middle of the harbor, to take on fuel. As is customary when a ship visits a port, numerous small vessels soon approached it. Two tugs maneuvered the ship along the dolphin, assisted by two smaller boats carrying line handlers, who would pull the mooring lines to the dolphin’s cleats and make them fast. The harbor pilot, when his task was complete, disembarked into a pilot boat, and the husbanding agent, a representative of the company arranging for fuel and other services, boarded from (probably) yet another boat. Several small scows came to take trash, as well as sewage pumped from the ship’s holding tanks.

Less than two hours after *Cole*’s arrival, another small craft approached the warship from the pier area across the harbor. One man was in the stern, handling the outboard motor, and a second was standing in the bow. The skiff turned toward the center of the warship, the man in the bow waving to the crew topside, and a moment later an explosion rocked the harbor. An explosive charge ripped a forty-by-forty-five-foot hole through the steel skin of the ship, killing seventeen sailors and wounding forty-two others.<sup>19</sup>

The attack was actually a second attempt. Earlier that year, on 3 January, USS *The Sullivans* (DDG 68), another guided-missile destroyer, had entered Aden Harbor to refuel. As it stood in, al-Qa‘ida operatives launched a small boat into the water from a trailer. The boat, overloaded with explosives, sank to the bottom almost immediately.<sup>20</sup> The failed attack escaped the notice of the U.S. intelligence community and, apparently, of the Yemeni government.<sup>21</sup> The boat and the explosives were later recovered and reassembled for use against another target of opportunity, which turned out to be *Cole*.<sup>22</sup>

### *Command and Control*

Investigations into the *Cole* bombing revealed three main areas of concern with respect to command and control. Ambiguity in the chain of command at the time of the Beirut bombing had been resolved, but the attack on *Cole* exposed a “seam” that came into play when forces transferred from one combatant commander to another. Second, the staff structure to support antiterrorism and force protection that had been created after Khobar Towers now proved weak and inefficient. Finally, the investigations found fault with the engagement strategy that had brought *Cole* to Yemen in the first place.

U.S. military forces are generally manned, equipped, and trained in the continental United States and then deployed forward to meet the requirements of regional combatant commanders. The Goldwater-Nichols Act strengthened the authority of the combatant commanders in their respective regions, but it did not enforce uniformity of practice and procedure. Therefore, when a ship, as *Cole* did, left the European Command area of responsibility to enter CENTCOM’s, its entire operational chain of command changed at the designated moment of transfer. This is significant because the changes included operating procedures, reporting processes, and administrative requirements, as well as the authorities who monitored them. This change occurred for *Cole* on 9 October, three days before the attack. *Cole* was no different in this respect from dozens of other ships passing into the Persian Gulf, but this “seam,” the magnitude and abruptness of the adjustments required of the ship and the lack of opportunity for the new commander to confirm them, likely made it easier for al-Qa’ida to surprise a newly arrived target of opportunity.

Specifically, the change of operational control to CENTCOM gave *Cole* a new immediate superior—Commander, Task Force 50 (CTF 50), the *Abraham Lincoln* carrier battle group commander. CTF 50 assumed responsibility for, in addition to all other aspects of the ship’s employment and logistics, *Cole*’s protection. The task force commander had designated an assistant to his staff intelligence officer as staff force-protection officer. One investigation of the subsequent attack was to criticize CTF 50’s lack of oversight of *Cole*. Specifically, obvious administrative errors in the *Cole*’s own force-protection plan had not been corrected, and, more important, the plan had not been tailored to address the specific conditions of Aden Harbor—notably, the existence of the fueling dolphin.

Lastly, the reports of the Defense Department’s *Cole* Commission (known as the Crouch-Gehman Report) and the House Armed Service Committee investigation would both question the appropriateness of Yemen as a place for fueling American warships. The choice of Yemen was a primary focus during the Senate

Armed Services Committee hearings as well. The chairman, Senator John Warner, pointedly asked, “The one question all of us keep hearing . . . [is] why Yemen?”<sup>23</sup>

The answer was that in 1997 the Yemenis had approached the State Department and Department of Defense hoping to improve relations with the United States. The Navy generally refueled warships at sea, steaming in groups. However, single-ship transits were becoming more common as the post–Cold War force structure began to draw down and as post–Gulf War requirements led Central Command to call for ships one or two at a time to enforce sanctions, their Tomahawk missiles ready. Until 1997 Djibouti had been the primary refueling stop for ships transiting from the Red Sea to the Persian Gulf. However, conditions there were becoming increasingly unsatisfactory. In 1998, given Yemeni interest, the deteriorating situation in Djibouti, and the lack of alternative ports, the Navy concluded a bunkering (fueling) contract with the port facility at Aden.

General Anthony Zinni, U.S. Marine Corps, who was the CENTCOM commander at the time, and his subordinate Vice Admiral Charles W. Moore, commander of the Fifth Fleet, both visited Aden to see the fueling facilities at first hand. A security survey, called a “vulnerability assessment,” was then conducted. Between September 1997 and December 2000, twenty-nine U.S. Navy ships visited Aden Harbor. Twenty-six of the twenty-nine calls were brief stops for fuel.

Yemen was known to be a dangerous place, but the configuration of Aden’s harbor, including the fact that ships would fuel at a dolphin in the middle of the harbor, seemed to mitigate security concerns. Normally, refueling ships moor to a pier and take fuel by hoses from “risers” installed in the pier or from trucks. A ship moored to a pier is more difficult to defend than one moored some distance from shore, because of vehicle and pedestrian access. Also, host nations typically prohibit visiting foreign military personnel from carrying weapons onto a pier. The choice of Yemen, then, was an attempt to balance engagement priorities and operational requirements with force-protection risks. The Crouch-Gehman commission, however, summarized its concern about this balance at the macropolicy level: “The execution of the engagement element of the National Security Strategy lacks an effective, coordinated interagency process, which results in a fragmented engagement program that may not provide optimal support to in-transit units.”<sup>24</sup>

### *Intelligence*

With respect to force-protection intelligence, *Cole* was on its own in many ways. The formal report to Commander, Fifth Fleet required by the Navy’s *Judge Advocate General Manual* (in service parlance, the “JAGMAN investigation” of this incident) described the system as “putting the burden on the unit to ‘pull’

information ‘down’ from various sources.”<sup>25</sup> Other avenues of assistance were missing. For example, the Navy Criminal Investigation Service provides force-protection intelligence in foreign ports frequented by the Navy, but none of its personnel were assigned to Yemen, and none traveled to meet the ship there.<sup>26</sup> In any case, human intelligence of the type that might have uncovered the attempted attack on *The Sullivans* was lacking. The Crouch-Gehman Report declares: “We, like other commissions before us, recommend the reprioritization of resources for collection and analysis, including human intelligence and signal intelligence, against the terrorist.”<sup>27</sup>

From a strategic intelligence perspective, there had been ample warning but no specific indications and no “actionable” intelligence. Some specific intelligence was later alleged to have come out of the 1998 al-Qa‘ida bombings of the American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, but if so, either the Federal Bureau of Investigation did not pass it on to the military or the warnings fell on deaf ears. In any case, other warnings came from national foreign intelligence sources in the summer of 2000. One was against a U.S. warship in Lebanon, but since the Navy had no ships there and did not plan to send any, the threat became part of the “chatter.”<sup>28</sup> There was no specific intelligence that put *Cole* in danger of a small-boat attack as it refueled in Yemen.

The Crouch-Gehman Report returned to the idea of a “seam,” this time regarding intelligence support. Apparently endorsing the JAGMAN investigation’s characterization of *Cole* as having had to “pull” relevant intelligence, the Crouch-Gehman commission held that intelligence support should be “dedicated from a higher echelon,” meaning that someone in the chain of command (i.e., with more resources) above *Cole* should have provided better support to the ship. The report went even farther and addressed specifically the tasking of intelligence assets: “Intelligence production must be refocused and tailored to overwatch transiting units to mitigate the terrorist threat.”<sup>29</sup>

### *Understanding the Threat*

Between 1996, the year of the Khobar Towers bombing, and 2000, large-scale terrorist attacks against American interests abroad continued, including the two 1998 East Africa embassy attacks. At the tactical level, antiterrorism and force protection became a routine part of operational planning for military units. In fact, *Cole* received accolades for the force-protection program it developed while preparing for its departure in August 2000 for its deployment to the Mediterranean and Middle East.<sup>30</sup> These procedures were proven during four successful port visits in the Mediterranean area on the way to Bahrain, in the Persian Gulf.

In the three days before the attack, the ship was focused on getting to its patrol station. *Cole* navigated through the Suez Canal, which typically takes from

twenty-four to thirty-six hours, then made a high-speed transit through the Red Sea to Yemen, where it was to fuel and then head to Bahrain to take up its primary mission. This preoccupation is important in retrospect for three reasons. First, the Navy facilities at Bahrain were recognized in April 2000 as having the best force-protection program in the Department of Defense; it was reasonable for the ship to assume accordingly that Bahrain was where the threat was acute. No special arrangements had been made for Yemen, and no American official, military or otherwise, came to meet the ship, not even the local defense attaché. Second, Yemen was merely a brief stop for fuel, a necessary pause as *Cole* hurried on the way to something more important. As the ship entered Yemen, the crew was “not attuned to, or even aware of, the heightened threat level” (that is, of the Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean).<sup>31</sup> Third, transiting forces are considered relatively secure. It is difficult for potential enemies to locate, let alone target, units moving from one theater to another. Discerning all this, the Crouch-Gehman Report focused on transiting forces and recommended that antiterrorism and force protection be treated as one of a ship’s primary missions.<sup>32</sup>

### PUTTING CHECKS IN THE BOXES

Eliot Cohen and John Gooch, in their book *Military Misfortunes*, argue that “every war brings to the surface areas of warfare that . . . do not come under the purview of preexisting military organization.” They define this tendency as a “problem-organization mismatch.”<sup>33</sup> Terrorism was clearly just such a challenge to the U.S. military in the 1980s and 1990s. Cohen and Gooch argue further that leadership must perceive *and correct* the problem-organization mismatch in order to win.<sup>34</sup> But the military did not perceive the problem-organization mismatch arising from the terrorist threat until after Khobar Towers. The military’s lack of progress in understanding the threat of terrorism from the Beirut barracks in 1983 to Khobar Towers in 1996 was a “failure to learn,” by Cohen and Gooch’s definition.<sup>35</sup> In its summary of observations, the Long Commission stated, “The most important message it can bring to the Secretary of Defense is that the 23 October 1983 attack on the Marine Battalion Landing Team Headquarters in Beirut was tantamount to an act of war using the medium of terrorism.” That lesson, however, was not actually learned until after Khobar Towers, thirteen years later.

The creation of the J-34 network in 1996 at the Joint Staff and subordinate force-protection positions throughout the chain of command was an attempt to align the organization with the problem. Unfortunately, organizational alignment was neither uniform nor sufficient to prevent the *Cole* attack. The “J-34” designation itself denotes that on a joint staff, the antiterrorism/force-protection office works in the current operations (J-3) branch. In the field, however, several

echelons below at the carrier-strike-group level, CTF 50's force-protection officer was designated "N20"—that is, a member of the staff intelligence branch (N2).<sup>36</sup> The intelligence branch naturally focused on threats to the strike group in its operating area (the Persian Gulf, in this case), not on the potential threats to small units steaming to join. The Fifth Fleet JAGMAN investigation deplored CTF 50's lack of oversight of the ship's force-protection planning and execution, particularly its tolerance of administrative errors and its generally hands-off approach.<sup>37</sup> The Crouch-Gehman Report recommended several organizational alignments to correct such deficiencies, including coordination between the State Department and the combatant commanders, as well as dedicated intelligence support from higher echelons for transiting units.<sup>38</sup>

Cohen and Gooch define a second category of failure, "failure to anticipate"—that is, "failure to take reasonable precautions against a known hazard."<sup>39</sup> The military learned to take seriously terrorism against its facilities abroad after Khobar Towers but failed to anticipate that the same threat might be faced by transiting forces. The new J-34 force-protection organization had brought attention to the issue but clearly not proficiency. The *mea culpa* for this fault came in plain language, and it came from Secretary of Defense William Cohen himself:

All of us who had responsibility for force protection of USS *Cole*—including the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of the Navy, the Chairman, the CNO, CINCCENT, CINCLANTFLT, COMUSNAVCENT, and CTF-50, as well as the Commanding Officer of USS *Cole*—did *not do enough to anticipate possible new threats.*<sup>40</sup>

#### *Failures at the Unit Level*

Scott Snook, in *Friendly Fire*, an analysis of the accidental shooting-down of two Army helicopters over northern Iraq, hypothesizes about general conditions that increase the likelihood of mishaps. Complex organizations working in stressful conditions over long periods of time are susceptible to something he calls "practical drift"—a slow, steady uncoupling of local practice from written procedure.<sup>41</sup> *Cole's* force-protection planning team had met before the previous four port visits but did not meet before the brief stop for fuel in Aden. Its members, having received no feedback on previous force-protection plans, modified their CTF 50-approved Aden plan at their own discretion. More research is required to determine if the lack of attention to detail and of interaction with superiors displayed here was due to "practical drift," but it is a plausible theory.

Admiral Harold W. Gehman (Retired), one of the co-chairs of the Defense Department's *Cole* investigation, offered an alternative theory in a speech at the Naval Academy in 2005. In it he described an organizational defense mechanism he called "trivialization"—diminishing the importance of something by endless

layers of administration and nit-picking.<sup>42</sup> “They had reduced the process down to its lowest common denominator. I send off a message. I get an answer back. Therefore, we are protected from terrorists.” *Cole* had put all the “checks in the boxes,” but the force-protection training did not “sink in,” Admiral Gehman argued. “Our investigation found that they essentially had gone through the motions. In other words, they had determined the minimum that needed to be done, and they had trivialized the whole event.”<sup>43</sup>

In the end, the *Judge Advocate General Manual* investigation concluded that “USS *Cole* . . . had sufficient available information to make an accurate assessment of the port Threat Levels and conditions in Aden, Yemen.” That is, the attack was a failure at the tactical level. The Chief of Naval Operations disagreed. He felt the attack could not have been prevented and the chain of command (including himself) “did not equip the skipper for success in the environment he encountered in Aden Harbor that fateful day.”<sup>44</sup> The secretary of defense concurred.

### *The Inevitability of Surprise*

Richard Posner’s book *Preventing Surprise Attacks* is a critical review of the 9/11 Commission report. It compares with September 11th the surprise attack at Pearl Harbor in 1941, the Tet Offensive in 1968, and the Yom Kippur War of 1973.<sup>45</sup> Posner “suggests that [some] surprise attacks cannot reliably be prevented” but that some *can* be prevented, deterred, or mitigated in their effects. Figure 3 summarizes the common features Posner found in the four events he reviewed and compares them with the *Cole* attack.

While little evidence suggests that the *Cole* attack was preventable, this possibility should not be ruled out. As noted in figure 3, no warning signs were observed, but that does not mean they were not present. Human-intelligence resources were not in place to unearth traces of the attempted attack on *The Sullivans*, and apparently no countersurveillance assets were in place to observe any “dry runs” the attackers may have made during succeeding fueling stops by American warships. The guided-missile frigate USS *Hawes* (FFG 53) and the guided-missile destroyers USS *Donald Cook* (DDG 75) and USS *Barry* (DDG 52) all refueled in Aden Harbor between *The Sullivans* and *Cole*.<sup>46</sup> But as the Crouch-Gehman Report holds, counterintelligence programs are “integral to force protection.”<sup>47</sup> Without assets ashore, there was a definite gap in counterintelligence coverage however vigilant the visiting ships were in observation and diligent in reporting.

Lastly, *Cole* failed to make itself a “hard target.” The intent of the force-protection measures directed for *Cole* was to provide greater security, of course, but also to demonstrate “resolve” to potentially hostile elements watching the ship or moving

**FIGURE 3**  
**COMPARISON OF USS COLE ATTACK TO SELECTED SURPRISE ATTACKS**

**Strategic factors:**

- The attacker was too weak to have a reasonable hope of success conventionally.
  - Al-Qa‘ida is a nonstate actor and lacks conventional forces.
- The victim’s perception of the enemy’s weakness contributed to his vulnerability.
  - A brief stop for fuel at a dolphin in daylight.
- The victim lacked understanding of capabilities and intentions.
  - “A waterborne suicide attack had not been considered likely.”<sup>a</sup>
- The victim was in a state of denial regarding the forms of attack hardest to defend against.
  - “We failed to anticipate what appeared to be the improbable or weakest link in the chain.”<sup>b</sup>
- Intelligence officers were reluctant to challenge superior’s opinion for career reasons.
  - An intelligence official resigned in protest the day after the attack.<sup>c</sup>

**Tactical factors:**

- The victim reasonably thought the principal danger was elsewhere or in the future.
  - *Cole*’s primary mission was in the Persian Gulf.
- The victim was lulled by false alarms or deliberate deceptions.
  - Nonspecific warning information was available in numbing quantity.
- Warnings to local commanders lacked clarity and credibility.
  - There was confusion about the applicable threat level in Yemen.<sup>d</sup>

**Posner’s common feature missing from the *Cole* attack:**

- Warning signs were interpreted based on the mirror-imaged assumption.
  - There were no *observed* warning signs.

a. HASC, executive summary, p. ii.

b. HASC, p. 39, General Hugh Shelton testimony.

c. John Diamond, “Red Flags Raised before *Cole* Bombing Warning Lacked Specific Details, Pentagon Says,” *Chicago Tribune*, 26 October 2000.

d. JAGMAN investigation, p. 103. For more detail see also pp. 20–23.

in to attack. The primary failure of *Cole*, as noted by the *Judge Advocate General Manual* investigation and endorsed by the Chief of Naval Operations, was the failure to screen approaching boats, whether with the assistance of the host-nation military, services contracted through the husbanding agent, or the ship’s own boats. As previously mentioned, the JAGMAN investigation and the Chief of Naval Operations disagreed on the issue of whom to hold accountable for this failure.

It is nearly impossible to discern a single, definitive answer as to what made *Cole* susceptible to a terrorist attack that day. There was organizational failure,

by which the ship was left without the appropriate support of higher headquarters. There were also small but important procedural and tactical errors by the commanding officer and his crew. Without a doubt, Snook's "practical drift" and Gehman's "trivialization" also played some role. Finally, the commonalities Posner finds among surprise attacks fit the *Cole* situation like a glove.

### A SHIFT TO THE OFFENSIVE

In order to assess the military's learning about force protection, this article has examined the findings of the investigations conducted after the terrorist attacks on the Beirut barracks in 1983, Khobar Towers in 1996, and *Cole* in 2000. Figure 4 updates the schematic of figure 1 to reflect the "learning curves" in command and control, intelligence, and threat definition over the seventeen-year period between the first attack studied and that on *Cole*.

Faced in 2000 with another failure in force protection, the military as an organization raised the priority of the terrorist threat. The Crouch-Gehman Report recommended, as noted, that antiterrorism/force-protection efforts be given equal weight with a unit's primary mission. In other words, force-protection training and equipment need to be on par with those devoted to traditional Navy missions like antisubmarine warfare, air defense, and strike warfare.<sup>48</sup> This prioritization has proved necessary to provide a self-defense capability for Navy units against the terrorist threat as they carry out missions around the globe. The military today is organizationally aligned with the problem, and force protection is prioritized as a primary mission—lesson learned.

Intelligence critiques of the three attacks decry the lack of human intelligence. More precisely, no available HUMINT assets were apparently tasked

**FIGURE 4**  
**MILITARY LEARNING 1983/1996/2000 TERRORIST ATTACKS**

	Beirut Barracks	Khobar Towers	USS <i>Cole</i>
Command-and-control outcome	Goldwater-Nichols Act	Force-protection staff creation	AT/FP <sup>a</sup> as a primary mission
Intelligence failure?	No	No	Yes
Definition of terrorism	Accident	War	War

a. AT/FP = antiterrorism/force protection.

according to the potential threat. The practical effect of this “failure to anticipate” was a gap in collection and analysis. A less obvious lesson, specifically from the *Cole* case, is the need for systematic counterintelligence at the unit level. Currently, unit-level training includes a robust countersurveillance capability, but more work needs to be done to determine how that might be improved. An effective counterintelligence program at the unit level closely knitted to a local human-intelligence capability focusing on the terrorist threat should be a goal of the force-protection program. Whether this lesson was truly learned is difficult to assess and may not be known (and then only in the negative sense) at the unclassified level unless there is another successful attack.

Finally, if the blood of the 277 service members killed in the three attacks studied in this article did not drive home the true nature of the terrorist threat to the armed forces, the attacks of 11 September 2001 surely did. The military’s organizational understanding of the threat matured, its force-protection efforts redoubled, and its stance became proactive. The shift to the offensive marked by Operations ENDURING FREEDOM and IRAQI FREEDOM signaled an end to the reactive posture of the pre-September 11th military.

Continued review of terrorist attacks against U.S. military forces may yield further lessons that if learned may improve the current program of deterrence, mitigation, and response. Force protection requires deeper investigation and reflection by commanders to ensure that the hard-won lessons of the last twenty-five years remain fresh during the current wars and beyond.

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#### NOTES

1. The six primary investigations reviewed for this article are: U.S. Defense Dept., *Report of the DOD Commission on Beirut International Airport Terrorist Act, October 23, 1983* (Washington, D.C.: 20 December 1983) [hereafter cited as the Long Commission]; U.S. Defense Dept., *Report to the President and Congress on the Protection of U.S. Forces Abroad* (Washington, D.C.: 15 September 1996) [hereafter Downing assessment], executive summary, available at [www.fas.org](http://www.fas.org); Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Central Command/Commander, Fifth Fleet, “Command Investigation into the Actions of USS *Cole* (DDG 67) in Preparing for and Undertaking a Brief Stop for Fuel at Bandar at Tawahi (Aden Harbor) Aden, Yemen on or about 12 October 2000” (redacted), Report to Commander,

U.S. Naval Forces Central Command, 27 November 2000, available at [www.intellnet.org/documents](http://www.intellnet.org/documents) [a Navy Judge Advocate General Manual investigation, hereafter cited as JAGMAN investigation]; U.S. Senate, *Lessons learned from the attack on U.S.S. Cole, on the report of the Crouch-Gehman Commission, and on the Navy’s Judge Advocate General Manual Investigation into the Attack, Including a Review of Appropriate Standards of Accountability for U.S. Military Services*, Hearing before the Committee on Armed Services, 107th Cong., 1st sess., 3 May 2001 [hereafter SASC]; U.S. Defense Dept., *USS Cole Commission Report: Learning from the Attack on the USS Cole . . . Implications for Protecting Transiting U.S. Forces from Terrorist Attack* (Washington,

D.C.: 2001) [hereafter Crouch-Gehman Report], executive summary, available at [www.fas.org](http://www.fas.org); and U.S. House, *The Investigation into the Attack on the USS Cole: Report of the House Armed Services Committee Staff* (Washington, D.C.: House Armed Services Committee, 2001) [hereafter HASC].

2. Eliot A. Cohen and John Gooch, *Military Misfortunes: The Anatomy of Failure in War* (New York: Free Press, 1990).
3. Long Commission. The description of the events in this paragraph is drawn from the executive summary.
4. James R. Locher III, *Victory on the Potomac: The Goldwater-Nichols Act Unifies the Pentagon* (College Station: Texas A&M Press, 2002), p. 162.
5. Ibid., pp. 142, 163.
6. Ibid., p. 144.
7. Long Commission, executive summary.
8. Locher, *Victory on the Potomac*, p. 161.
9. Long Commission, p. 63.
10. Ibid., p. 127.
11. Locher, *Victory on the Potomac*, p. 154.
12. Ibid., p. 161.
13. Downing assessment, executive summary.
14. William S. Cohen, memorandum, 9 January 2001, "Subj: Review of USS Cole (DDG-67) Attack Reports and Suggestions for Additional Recommended Actions," available at [www.gwu.edu](http://www.gwu.edu).
15. Arlen Specter, "Senate Intelligence Committee Chairman Finds Khobar Towers Bombing 'Not the Result of an Intelligence Failure,'" press release, 12 September 1996, p. 1, available at [www.gwu.edu](http://www.gwu.edu).
16. Downing assessment.
17. Ibid.
18. Ibid. [emphasis in the original].
19. JAGMAN investigation, p. 8. Initial reports put the size of the hole as thirty-two by thirty-six feet.
20. U.S. Justice Dept., *Terrorism 2000/2001* (Washington, D.C.: Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2004), p. 8, available at [www.fbi.gov](http://www.fbi.gov).
21. Barbara Bodine, interview with author, 2 May 2007 at the John F. Kennedy School of Government, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Ambassador Bodine, who was the U.S. ambassador to Yemen at the time of the bombing, stated that the attack on *The Sullivans* was staged from outside the harbor and in daylight hours during Ramadan, when Muslims tend to be indoors.

22. Ibid.
23. Transcript, reprinted in "U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee Holds a Hearing on the Recent Attack in Yemen on the USS Cole October 19, 2000," [GlobalSecurity.org](http://GlobalSecurity.org).
24. Crouch-Gehman Report, p. 1.
25. JAGMAN investigation, Opinion 17, p. 104; Ibid., Recommendation 14, p. 109.
26. HASC, p. 11.
27. Crouch-Gehman Report, p. 2 [emphasis added].
28. Richard Miniter, *Losing Bin Laden: How Bill Clinton's Failures Unleashed Global Terror* (Washington, D.C.: Regency, 2003), p. 215.
29. Crouch-Gehman Report, p. 2.
30. JAGMAN investigation, p. 6.
31. Ibid., p. 96.
32. Crouch-Gehman Report, p. 9.
33. Cohen and Gooch, *Military Misfortunes*, p. 84.
34. Ibid.
35. Cohen and Gooch, *Military Misfortunes*, pp. 26–29.
36. JAGMAN investigation, p. 83.
37. Ibid., pp. 102–103.
38. Crouch-Gehman Report, pp. 5–7.
39. Cohen and Gooch, *Military Misfortunes*, p. 121.
40. William S. Cohen, memorandum, 19 January 2001, "Subj: Assessment of Accountability Arising from the Attack on USS Cole (DDG-67) on 12 October 2000," available at [www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate](http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate) [emphasis added]. CNO is the Chief of Naval Operations; CINCCENT is Commander in Chief, Central Command; CINCLANTFLT (since renamed) was Commander in Chief, U.S. Atlantic Fleet; and COMUSNAVCENT is Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Central Command.

41. Scott A. Snook, *Friendly Fire: The Accidental Shootdown of U.S. Black Hawks over Northern Iraq* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 2000), pp. 219–20.
42. Harold W. Gehman, Jr., *Ethical Challenges for Organizations: Lessons Learned from the USS Cole and Columbia Tragedies* (speech, U.S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, Md., 7 December 2005), p. 11, available at [www.usna.edu](http://www.usna.edu).
43. Ibid.
44. This quote is from a message the Chief of Naval Operations sent to the entire Navy. It was entered verbatim into testimony before the above-cited SASC hearing on 3 May 2001 (p. 44).
45. Richard A. Posner, *Preventing Surprise Attacks: Intelligence Reform in the Wake of 9/11* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005), p. 97.
46. JAGMAN investigation, p. 36.
47. Crouch-Gehman Report, p. 7.
48. Force protection in this context should not be confused with a force-protection posture or employment that minimizes the exposure of military forces to potential risk. Force protection more broadly embraces tools, tactics, techniques, and procedures to deter, mitigate, and respond to terrorist attacks while pursuing a forward-deployed mission.

# THROUGH A MIRROR DARKLY

## The Face of Future War, 1871–2005

*Richard J. Norton*

**T**rying to predict the nature of future wars is nothing new. Given the stakes, it is not surprising that efforts to pierce the barrier of warfare's event horizon have long occupied security professionals. Accordingly, attempts to identify future enemies, theaters, tactics, and technologies have collectively represented an important component in strategic planning. Intelligence estimates, personality profiles of potential enemy leaders, and war plans of every hue and dimension provide tangible evidence of these efforts.

Nor has imagining the future of warfare been the exclusive domain of the national-security professional. A large body of film and literature has been devoted to imagining the wars of the future.<sup>1</sup> Some of these efforts, such as Robert

Heinlein's *Starship Troopers* and its polar opposite, Joseph Haldeman's *The Forever War*, have been prize-winning moneymakers. Interestingly, Haldeman wrote his book as much to come to grips with his personal experience of combat as to achieve literary recognition and profit.

In contrast, official predictive writings of future wars are usually classified and not written with an eye to literary merit. Such scenarios of future conflict are written by security professionals for security professionals, using extensive analyses of military hardware and capabilities to craft their plans and predictions. These works move along official chains of command

*A professor of national security affairs in the National Security Decision Making Department of the Naval War College, Dr. Norton holds an undergraduate degree from Tulane University and a PhD in international relations from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy. Before retiring as a commander in the U.S. Navy, he served extensively at sea in cruisers and destroyers and in a variety of political-military billets ashore. He has published articles on failed states, humanitarian early warning, and emerging security, and numerous case studies and three edited volumes on national security. His pioneering work on the phenomenon known as "feral cities," initially published in the Naval War College Review, was included in the New York Times' "Ideas of the Year for 2004."*

and communication, and they rarely, if ever, attract public notice. The writings of Dwight David Eisenhower or Maxwell Taylor while they were attached to the Plans Division of the U.S. Army headquarters staff are two examples of such work. Others are the memos and briefings prepared by Lieutenant Colonel Earl “Pete” Ellis, U.S. Marine Corps. (Ellis, often called the “father of amphibious warfare,” became convinced in the 1920s that a U.S.-Japanese war in the Pacific was inevitable.) Disseminating and analyzing the works of such specialists have been the tasks of historians, not contemporary civilian publishers.

At the other end of the literary spectrum are found the works of fiction, particularly science-fiction, writers. These writings tend to be unencumbered by current technological constraints or serious military analysis. Here, the envisioned future battle is often simply a vehicle in which to explore character development and relationships or to recount adventures. The author is almost never a security professional. H. G. Wells is perhaps the best known of this breed of writers, which also includes Jules Verne, Arthur Conan Doyle, and, more recently, Orson Scott Card.

This article, however, deals with a narrow band of articles and books between the official analyses of the security professional and the imagined futures of the fiction writer. Each work that will be discussed here was penned by a security professional, sometimes retired but often on active service when writing. All of these authors benefited at first hand from contemporary military research and understood the nature of combat of their day. Profit, although presumably welcomed, was not their motive for writing. Rather, these authors had messages they desperately wanted to be heard and, officialdom having turned a deaf ear, placed their tales before the general public.

To do so required a fair amount of courage and the assumption of potentially significant risk, especially when the author was a serving military officer. Historically, military service cultures have been tight lipped about their work, particularly when it comes to potential future combat. Since entering the military as cadets or midshipmen, officers have been wrapped in intricate codes and customs of conduct. Common to all of these codes, both formal and informal, has been a prohibition against speaking ill of one’s seniors or service. There are good reasons for this behavior. In most democracies, serving officers are not expected to take part in, much less initiate, public debates. Literary talent is not necessarily seen as a desirable trait in an officer but rather as a source of distraction from more important pursuits. There is also a sense that any writing that exposes a particular military vulnerability increases the threat to the service not only from potential enemies but also from domestic politicians and internal service rivals. When these works touch on interservice feuds and arguments, the risk to military authors seen to be taking sides grows larger yet again.

Yet, write security professionals sometimes did. Since 1871 not a decade has gone by that has not seen at least one major contribution to this subgenre of literature. Each of these efforts has used the literary device of a “future history,” or what might be called “forward, looking back.”

As this article will show, these writers can be grouped in terms of their purposes into three categories, which we may call “Cassandrans,” “Prometheans,” and “Seers.” Each author picked up the pen with a different motivation and goal in mind. In some cases elements of more than one category are present, but it remains easy to identify the fundamental motivation of the author.

*Cassandrans* seek to sound the tocsin, to call attention to dangers and conditions that if not addressed will harm or even destroy the state. For these writers, setting the story in a future where calamity has already befallen the target audience is a means of driving the warning home.

In contrast, *Prometheans* are highly optimistic. Their writings are accounts of victories. The key to victory is usually some new technology or strategy. The guarantors of victory are the pioneers who, despite misgivings or apprehensions among mainstream military thinkers, have forged the new tool and learned how to use it. In the hands of Prometheans, the future is a land of validation and proof of concept.

Both Prometheans and Cassandrans clearly have axes to grind. *Seers*, in contrast, take a more dispassionate position and simply attempt to predict the future. Perhaps not surprisingly, the category of Seers tends to be the least populated of the three. This article will provide a brief chronological survey of major writings in this genre, from 1871 to 2005. In each instance the purpose will be identified, information regarding the author provided, and category assigned. Next, the degree to which the authors were successful in their predictions will be discussed.

## THE BEGINNING

In 1871, despite all the cultural and bureaucratic obstacles to publishing a military critique in the public domain, Colonel (later General) Sir George Tomkyns Chesney's *The Battle of Dorking* appeared in *Blackwood's Magazine*, and a whole subgenre of literature was launched. Chesney, a Royal Engineer, had watched as the new German army, in particular its Prussian components, crushed France the year before. In doing so, the Germans proved they had the model modern army. It was well equipped and well supported. Huge reserves could be mobilized into service and be expected to perform almost as well as the most experienced regular units. Its artillery was first rate. The Great General Staff performed planning and logistics miracles. In short, the German army was everything the British army was not. The British army was tiny. It had next to no

reserves, its administration was antiquated, and its logistics were archaic. Much of its equipment was out of date. The army had never exercised a formation larger than a corps. Discussion of reform in Her Majesty's army had been building for more than a decade, but little had been accomplished. Chesney was clearly on the side of the reformers, and so he wrote his story.

In *Dorking*, an old man tells his grandchild how, years before, the power and majesty of the British Empire had been destroyed when a modern Prussian army made its way across the English Channel and shattered its gallant but hopelessly outclassed British counterpart.<sup>2</sup> All the weaknesses identified by the reformers, as well as others only hinted at, such as a plethora of septuagenarian generals, were instrumental in Chesney's account of the German capture of London, the loss of Britain's imperial possessions, the elimination of Queen Victoria's political power, and the relegation of the United Kingdom to the role of a third-rate power on the world stage. Chesney's Cassandra warning was manifest to every reader: if serious military reform was not undertaken and the Germans ever got across the channel, England was doomed.

Any modern author would be happy to have the reception *Dorking* found among both the reading public and political elites. The book quickly went through multiple editions, was translated into more than a half-dozen languages, and became the topic of parliamentary debates. These debates were often acrimonious. Some of Chesney's critics presaged the chest-thumping bravado of later "jingoes," suggesting that while Teutonic science had indeed triumphed over France, Britons were made of sterner stuff—should the kaiser's minions ever set foot on England's soil, they would quickly be defeated. Others, particularly representatives of the Royal Navy, took more defensible positions, pointing out that Chesney's whole premise—that the invaders find safe passage to the shores of Dover—required the absence of the fleet. This, they argued, strained credulity to the breaking point, for the Germans had no navy of which to speak and the British would never leave home waters completely unguarded.<sup>3</sup>

It is difficult to judge accurately the impact *Dorking* had in advancing the military reform movement. Its publication did coincide with one of the most significant periods of reform in the history of the British army and likely contributed in some degree to the successes enjoyed by the proponents of reform. However, it must also be admitted that compared to the armies of continental powers, the British military establishment remained thereafter woefully disorganized and conducted no large-scale exercises such as would be required to master the intricacies of contemporary warfare.

*Dorking* was much more successful in spawning literary imitations. Suddenly there was a major demand for "invasion stories." Similar story lines, albeit with different victims, appeared in numerous venues, some in the United States. The

most common form of publication was initial serialization in a magazine or newspaper, followed by issuance in book form if there was sufficient demand. These tales, clearly profit motivated, became less and less realistic, however entertaining. Chesney, nonetheless, had placed a new literary genre on the map. Within a decade, writers associated with Great Britain's naval establishment were writing both Cassandra and Promethean stories for British public consumption.<sup>4</sup> It was the naval Prometheans who provided the most interesting writing of this time.

In his short story *In a Conning Tower: How I Took HMS Majestic into Action*, Hugh Arnold Oakley-Foster waxes eloquent concerning the advances that a certain new, and very costly, type of ship would bring to Britain's navy. This story came at a crucial junction of naval architecture. Advances in metallurgy, mechanics, engineering, propulsion, gunnery, and fire control now allowed the construction of revolutionary warships in which systems could be centrally directed from armored conning towers. Oakley-Foster's story, in which a lone British ironclad, superbly captained, restores English maritime dominance to the Mediterranean, extols the virtues of these ships.<sup>5</sup>

It is not surprising that Oakley-Foster trumpeted the superiority of and the need for the new ironclads. A successful diplomat and politician, he served not only as private secretary to the Chief Secretary for Ireland but as a member of Parliament. More important, Oakley-Foster was both secretary of the Admiralty from 1900 to 1903 and secretary of war from 1903 to 1905.<sup>6</sup> *In a Conning Tower* was apparently well received, although it did not enjoy the success of *Dorking*. Again, the impact of the work on national decision making is hard to judge, but the Royal Navy did embrace ironclad technology with a will, as did every other naval power.

One of the more interesting examples of a Seer's writing appeared on the eve of the First World War. In Captain C. E. Vickers's *The Trenches*, a British army is locked in a desperate struggle with a continental foe. Both armies are entrenched, but the British forces must leave the safety of their lines and charge the enemy if success is to be achieved. In order to do so, however, the British must first bring their trenches close enough to those of the enemy to ensure that enough assault troops can reach the enemy positions to achieve victory. The dilemma is explained with apparent mathematical certainty: so many men can dig so much trench in a given period, in which time the enemy will inflict so many casualties.

*Trenches* reflected a growing awareness among security professionals that modern weapons were giving a battlefield advantage to soldiers in fixed defensive positions. This had been demonstrated during the U.S. Civil War, the second Anglo-Boer War, and the Russo-Japanese War. It was believed, nonetheless, that

sufficiently motivated and professional troops could carry enemy trenches if they could get close enough first, under protection, to avoid suffering debilitating casualties as they crossed “no-man’s-land.” This problem is solved in *Trenches* through the arrival of what amounts to a deus ex machina. An American salesman—rough, uncouth, and interested only in the bottom line—appears in the nick of time with an armored and tracked tractor that can safely dig trenches across a bullet-swept battlefield faster and more reliably than humans with picks and shovels could ever hope to. In the novel, the machine does its job, Britain’s troops are able to “jump off” from close enough to their opponent’s trench line, and victory is assured.

*Trenches* apparently failed to interest either the general public or British security elites. Given the speed with which the First World War engulfed Europe, this is surprising, considering how closely *Trenches* predicted both the stalemate of trench warfare and the convergence of technologies that would eventually break that stalemate. The growing power and reliability of the internal combustion engine, Caterpillar tracks, and armor were what made Vickers’s trenching machine successful. Had he equipped his machine with machine guns and cannons and driven it over enemy lines, his book would have effectively predicted the creation of the tank.

The two decades following the First World War were dominated by Prometheans, although, as will be argued, one Seer deserves special mention. Nascent technologies, particularly involving armored units and heavy bombers, had produced adherents who were as much missionaries as analysts. Notable examples include the U.S. Army general Billy Mitchell and the British armor zealots J. F. C. Fuller and B. H. Liddell Hart. The latter’s German counterpart included German generals Erwin Rommel and Heinz Guderian. Mitchell’s fellow airpower enthusiasts included the “Mahan of the air,” General Giulio Douhet of Italy.<sup>7</sup>

Opposing these champions of change, especially among the victorious Allies, were the major military establishments. In the main, senior leaders were unwilling to devote the required resources to fielding and validating the new units, tactics, and doctrines of air and armored warfare. Organizational theory would suggest that they were also reluctant to face the changes that would affect military structures and cultures should the new technologies be successful. Political support for such expenditures, again particularly in the West, was also lacking.

Given bureaucratic inertia and entrenched reluctance at senior levels to “see the future,” it was perhaps inevitable that the Prometheans of air and armor would take up the pen.<sup>8</sup> Two notable results, of very different literary calibers, were *The Battle of Dora*, by the Englishman H. E. Graham, and *War in the Air*, by the German “Major Holders.”<sup>9</sup> *Dora* extols the virtues of a British armored

brigade called into action on the European continent on behalf of the League of Nations in order to stop what is obviously German aggression. *Dora* argues not only for the utility of armored cars and tanks but also for an independent role for armored formations. Equipped with proper weapons and tactics, the armored brigade wreaks havoc on the enemy, cutting inside the decision-making loops of enemy commanders, panicking conscript soldiers, and channeling enemy forces into “killing zones.”

*War in the Air* presents an even more ambitious scenario. Forced into war with France, Britain’s “natural enemy,” England is saved from annihilation by only three hundred heavy bombers. These “giants” paralyze the French with a decapitating strike on Paris, destroy the inferior and fighter-heavy French air force in aerial combat, and then, despite being used in the less than optimum role of close air support, shatter a French invasion that has somehow managed to come ashore in the south of England. The message of *War in the Air* is a simple one: a state with a strategic bombing force need fear no rival, particularly if its leaders are willing to use a preemptive strategy.

Both Graham’s and Helders’s works give what can only be described as terror a central role in a successful war strategy. Graham’s tanks—invulnerable, rapid, and deadly—drain the will from their victims and increase the number of civilian refugees with which the invaders will have to contend. But this terror is small beer compared to what Helders envisions. Helders’s airplanes drop gas, high explosive, and incendiaries with the express purpose of terrorizing civilian populations to the point where they will riot in order to force their governments to sue for peace. The heavy bombers’ impact is as devastating psychologically as it is militarily.

Graham clearly belonged to the school of Fuller and Liddell Hart. He was one of the young officers of the interwar period who passionately believed in the power of the tank and sought to force change upon an unresponsive military establishment. As such, he is an interesting author and a good exemplar of the breed of security professionals who were willing to risk the wrath of their services in order to serve what they perceived to be the greater good.

Helders, cut from the same proselytizing cloth as Graham, is even more interesting from a personal point of view. “Major Helders” is a nom de plume for General der Flieger (that is, of Aviation) Dr. Robert Knauss, a die-hard proponent of the big bomber and one of the men who helped orchestrate Germany’s secret rearmament during the period between the wars. Unlike Graham, Knauss did not have to convince a government that it was time to increase the production of military equipment. His fight was with other military missionaries who were eager to secure what resources were available for armored formations, submarines, or tactical aviation.

Graham's *Dora* failed to connect with the public, but Graham and like-minded officers eventually were fairly successful in selling their "gift from the heavens."<sup>10</sup> Although the fight was always uphill and the gains never as wide or deep as the armor missionaries wanted, Britain did come to embrace the idea of independent tank formations and increasingly exercised armor-specific formations on the Salisbury Plain. These efforts gained a boost as cavalry units, smarting under a universal realization of their obsolescence, seized upon armor as a way to retain their importance, and their customs and traditions as well, by replacing their flesh-and-blood mounts with mechanical ones.

Knauss's work was far better received than that of Graham. *War in the Air* was translated into several languages and conveyed well the idea of bombers always "getting through." It failed to produce results in Germany's revitalized war efforts, but that was largely due to the death (fittingly, in the crash of a Ju-89, the prototype for Knauss's "Giants") of General Walter Wever, Knauss's patron and Germany's leading advocate of the centrality of strategic bomber forces. While both Graham and Knauss were focused on Europe, a Seer was busy writing about what he believed would be the next Great War, a conflict between the navies of Japan and the United States for control of the Pacific Ocean and the resources of Asia. This was Hector C. Bywater, and his 1925 *The Great Pacific War: A History of the American-Japanese Campaign of 1931–33* gathered a great deal of attention indeed. Bywater was an intriguing individual. As a boy (he was born near Portsmouth, England, a British subject) he was fascinated by naval matters, and this interest never faded. At the age of nineteen he became a journalist for the *New York Herald*, covering the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905 from Tokyo. He continued his interest in and reporting of naval matters. In the years before the First World War he became an agent of MI5 (the British counterintelligence and security service), with the pay of a lieutenant commander, using his access as a journalist to spy for Britain. His portfolio eventually included both American and German naval activities.

Aided by his deep knowledge of naval matters, the disposition of U.S. and Japanese forces, and the dictates of geography, Bywater pictured a war in which the Japanese rapidly struck without warning, forcing the United States back across the Pacific and leaving Japan safe behind concentric island rings of defenses. The United States, far from accepting the initial losses or seeking an armistice, girded for battle, flexed its industrial muscle, made good its damage, and came sweeping back, forsaking a direct route to Japan in favor of an island-hopping strategy. Bywater gave pride of place to battleships, and his vision of the war's climactic battles owed more to Mahan than Douhet, but he did not discount the role of the aircraft, the submarine, or the amphibious invasion in his envisioned war.<sup>11</sup>

In contrast to many works in this genre, Bywater's prose was slick and his story well paced and enjoyable. The book, initially declined by publishers in the United States as too provocative, appeared in Britain to rave reviews—one, in the U.S. Naval Institute *Proceedings*, by Admiral William S. Sims, commander of U.S. naval forces in Europe during World War I. Bywater then received what any writer can only see as a gift from heaven. Franklin Delano Roosevelt, then the Assistant Secretary of the Navy, took him on in the pages of the *Baltimore Sun*, claiming that such a war was not possible. Interest in the book duly skyrocketed; more editions were printed, it was translated into several languages, including Japanese, and naval officers from Washington to Tokyo analyzed the work in depth.

Whether or not Bywater's book directly impacted the actions of naval planners will likely never be known. What is known is that War Plan ORANGE was revamped. An anticipated direct strike at the Japanese home islands was scrapped and an island-hopping strategy substituted. When World War II eventually engulfed the globe, both the Japanese and the United States would use strategies very similar to those predicted by Bywater.

War accelerates all forms of change, and the Second World War was no exception. World War I had left security professionals at the doorway of mechanized warfare; World War II ushered in the atomic age. It also provided Lieutenant Colonel Robert B. Rigg ample opportunity to serve as a Promethean, delivering nuclear fire.

Rigg had started his U.S. Army career as an officer in the cavalry, literally on horseback. He transitioned to armor and also served as a military observer during Mao Tse-tung's victory over Chinese Nationalist forces. He then served in the Army research and development branch, working for Lieutenant General James Galvin, who had won fame in World War II as the Army's youngest, and one of its first, paratroop generals. In 1958 Rigg wrote *War—1974*, a future history of atomic war on the Eurasian continent.<sup>12</sup> His book, while perhaps deficient in literary style, concentrated on the technological advances and new tactics such a war would bring. In Rigg's Promethean vision, flying tanks, electronic sensors, missile-firing submarines, data networks, and vertical assault by troop-carrying helicopters were all featured. He also foresaw eternally orbiting atomic-powered aircraft, fuel supplies delivered by rocket to armored units in the field, and single-man "flying disks" used as observation platforms. In Rigg's war, command and control are decentralized, units not supremely mobile are incinerated in nuclear fire, and warfare consumes the human, fiscal, and material resources of entire nations.

Rigg's thinking reflected that of those in the Army who would eventually transform its organization from that of the Second World War and the follow-on

Constabulary in Europe and Germany to the “Pentomic Army,” designed to fight and win on nuclear, as well as conventional, battlefields.<sup>13</sup> This concept survived into the early 1960s.

Rigg’s book was published during a period of continuing interest in nuclear weapons and the forces that would use them. Faint echoes of General der Flieger Knauss could be heard as U.S. Air Force generals, notably Curtis LeMay, argued that the combination of heavy bombers and nuclear bombs had rendered navies and armies all but obsolete. Rigg was as every bit as enamored with technology as LeMay, but his book clearly made the case for large, indeed very large, and capable ground forces.

Rigg’s book failed to catch fire with the American public, much less with a broader global readership. It could be that his depiction of epic devastation and apocalyptic destruction offered too little in the way of hope. Unlike those offered by earlier Prometheans, Rigg’s gifts did not promise reduced casualties or faster victory. Also, the end of the Eisenhower administration brought in the strategy of “Flexible Response,” which argued that Rigg’s nightmare could be avoided through the maintenance of conventional forces in Europe, a strong nuclear deterrent, and unconventional forces to handle contingency operations that would be encountered on lower rungs of the escalatory ladder.

If Rigg was the Promethean voice of the first half of the Cold War, General Sir John Hackett of the British army was the Cassandra emeritus of the second half. Hackett, like Rigg, had extensive experience on which to base his predictions, having served in the army for more than thirty years. During the Second World War he fought in Syria and Italy and had commanded the 4th Parachute Brigade during the Arnhem operation. After the war he continued to serve, eventually commanding the British Army of the Rhine, NATO’s northern bulwark against a possible Soviet invasion. In 1978 Hackett wrote *The Third World War August 1985: A Future History*, a future history of a cataclysmic Soviet-NATO clash in Europe.<sup>14</sup>

Deeply etched throughout Hackett’s book is a warning—that if the West did not increase defense budgets and field new and promising weapons systems, Soviet and Warsaw Pact forces would be able to achieve a military victory in Europe. NATO does win in Hackett’s account, but just barely, not decisively enough to avoid a limited nuclear exchange.<sup>15</sup> Hackett clearly believed that if NATO truly wanted to avoid the horrors of a third world war, the way to do so was to strengthen its collective defenses, not weaken them, as seemed all too likely. Although dry in places and prone to lengthy examinations of command-and-control issues, *The Third World War* was highly readable and possessed an air of authenticity.

At the time Hackett wrote *The Third World War*, many serious military observers and political analysts were beginning to be concerned about the U.S.-NATO/Soviet–Warsaw Pact balance of forces. The Soviets were apparently making large strides among a variety of postcolonial and anticolonial movements. Russian advances in maritime platforms, armor, and, most especially, nuclear forces were significant and showed no signs of slowing. In the Mediterranean, Greco-Turk relations were growing increasingly strained, and the southern flank of the NATO alliance seemed in danger of unraveling.<sup>16</sup> Growing calls for serious defense cuts in Britain’s defense budget, a growing reluctance among European youth to follow the colors, and a manifest resistance to the draft in the United States were all reasons to be concerned about the credibility of the West’s conventional deterrent.

Again in contrast to Rigg, Hackett enjoyed tremendous success with his book; eventually, more than three million copies were sold. The book was discussed throughout the NATO alliance, and no critic was able to mount a legitimate attack against Hackett’s credentials. Many of his recommendations were implemented, particularly regarding research into and the eventual fielding of certain types of weapons systems. While it would be substantially overstating Hackett’s influence to credit him with these shifts in NATO defense spending, *The Third World War* can be seen as a contributing factor to a growing willingness to put more resources into conventional deterrent forces in Europe.

After the Cold War and the successful conclusion of the first Gulf War, the U.S. military was able and willing to take on missions it had considered secondary to combat operations. These included a variety of peace operations, disaster-relief efforts, and counterdrug activities. Even more exotic tasks were undertaken, including detailing military doctors to urban hospital emergency rooms, sending military instructors to local classrooms, and (although this project was not carried out) running “tough love” boot camps for troubled teenagers. At the same time, the American public identified its military as an institution deserving the highest confidence and trust, easily scoring better in public opinion polls than Congress or the independent media. Military leaders, in particular General Colin Powell, were seen by some as more desirable presidential candidates than the men put forward by the major parties.

The combination of new missions and intense public support, among other factors, led Major Charles A. Dunlap, an active-duty U.S. Air Force lawyer, to write “The Coup of 2012,” first published in the Army War College’s journal *Parameters* in the winter of 1992.<sup>17</sup> Dunlap presented his article in the form of an address to future war college students, looking back at the past decades. This was a classic use of future history.

Dunlap's argument is simple. Pressed by public demand to take on more untraditional missions, the U.S. military gradually becomes more and more involved in areas that previously had been the sole domain of civil organizations. Military discipline, planning, and resources typically produce successes that, in turn, bring increasing demands for deeper participation in civil life. Inevitably, a political crisis occurs, and a military leader assumes the reins of power. Unlike Cincinnatus, he does not relinquish control, and a military dictatorship ensues.

The brief and well written "Coup" attracted immediate attention from a wide variety of audiences. The article was quickly incorporated into war college and other syllabi. It made the rounds of senior officers in the Pentagon and sparked a lively debate about the nature and state of civil-military relations in the United States. Dunlap's career suffered no ill effects from his article; he is, as of this writing, a major general, serving as deputy judge advocate general of the Air Force.

The final example of this genre was published in 2005 in the pages of *The Atlantic*. Richard A. Clarke, an expert in counterterrorism and a staff member of both the Clinton and George W. Bush National Security Councils, had been a major figure in post-9/11 investigations. In his article, Clarke projects the United States ten years into the future, from which vantage point he explains how the war on terror has been lost.<sup>18</sup> Clarke is a Cassandra of the first water. On every page he warns of the consequences of flawed policies, poor decisions, and strategic mismanagement. Terrorists seize upon every opportunity; they—and an ill-timed and mismanaged war with Iran—humble the United States.

Given Clarke's credentials and the intense public interest in the war on terror, it is surprising that "Ten Years Later" fizzled. The article generated a few letters to the editor but has passed into obscurity. There are several likely explanations for this lack of response. First, there have been no successful attacks inside the United States since 11 September 2001;<sup>19</sup> the United States has spent a great deal of money and undergone substantial internal reorganization in order to improve homeland security. Further, it is possible that Richard Clarke, a vocal and highly visible opponent of the Bush administration, came across as too personally vested in his story. Clarke clearly felt his advice had been ignored and his talents underutilized, and "Ten Years Later" reflects this resentment. Also, at the time of publication Clarke made frequent appearances in a large variety of media venues; perhaps the public became surfeited with the former terrorism expert. For whatever reason, Clarke's work did not evoke the intense interest that the writings of Chesney, Bywater, Hackett, and Dunlap had.

## GETTING THEIR WARS RIGHT

Clarke's "Ten Years Later" serves as an apt literary bookend to Chesney's *Dorking*. Between these two works lie 124 years of this peculiar subgenre of

predictive writing. The men selected for this article were all experienced professionals.<sup>20</sup> They had access to official intelligence and what can be termed “inside knowledge.” It is therefore reasonable to ask: Did they get it right? Which group—Cassandrans, Prometheans, or Seers—was most likely to be accurate?

The answer is somewhat subjective and surprising. With the exception of Bywater and, to a lesser extent, Vickers, none of the authors correctly predicted future conflicts.<sup>21</sup> The Germans did not invade England in the nineteenth century. Great Britain fought no major naval duels in the Mediterranean in the 1890s. Great-power war, whether featuring armored units or air armadas, did not engulf Europe in the 1920s. The world did not have to suffer global nuclear war in the 1970s. The U.S. military has resisted any temptations to launch a coup d'état, and, say what one will about the global war on terror, any claim of a strategic American defeat at this point would be grossly exaggerated.

However, to dismiss these authors would be premature. A more nuanced look shows that if one concentrates not on the predicted wars but instead on the technologies, the prophetic power of the Prometheans begins to look rather impressive. For instance, Oakley-Foster’s ironclads were to fight (though not with British crews) at the battles of the Yalu in 1894, of Santiago and Manila Bay in 1898, and Tsushima in 1905. Follow-on classes of battleships would retain almost all of the attributes that Oakley-Foster found so noteworthy. Armored brigades, much less armored divisions, would do all that H. E. Graham thought they would and more, particularly in the opening engagements of the Second World War. Although the utility of armored formations was to wax and wane over the years, the legacy of Stryker brigades in today’s U.S. Army can easily be traced back to early tanks and armored vehicles so beloved by Graham. Graham’s tactics, especially when combined with tactical airpower, would become the blitzkrieg, in battlefields from Poland to Egypt and Iraq.

General der Flieger Knauss would also have found justification in the emergence of massive fleets of heavy bombers and of strategic bombing campaigns designed to destroy the manufacturing capabilities of states and break the will of nations.<sup>22</sup> However, it was the Allies who would build the air armadas, not the Germans. Also, the heavy bolt from the blue would prove less decisive than Graham’s armored fist as a war-winning weapon. Public will was to prove much more resistant to being broken than anticipated, and bombing campaigns would fail to deliver the knockout blow their proponents believed they would.

Knauss, Graham, and, to a lesser degree, Oakley-Foster have one thing in common: they grossly underestimated the number of machines required to achieve their envisioned victories. Before World War II was over, there would be armored armies and corps. Knauss’s entire national force of three hundred heavy bombers represents less than a third of the size of some of the air raids that

would be mounted over the Third Reich. Efforts to build fleets of dreadnought battleships may have helped trigger the First World War. In short, these Prometheans tended to oversell the capabilities of their particular “gifts from the gods.”

Of all the Prometheans, Lieutenant Colonel Rigg deserves the most credit for getting equipment trajectories correct. At first glance, such pride of place seems odd, especially in light of the rather fanciful illustrations of Rigg’s flying tanks and “big-helmeted men” published as exemplars of the technology he touted. However, when one considers the Russian Hind and U.S. Apache attack helicopters, “flying tank” does not seem so outlandish after all. Furthermore, the networked battlefield and soldiers, precision munitions, and warfare in the electronic spectrum are all among Rigg’s successful predictions.

What, then, of the track record for the Cassandrans? The short answer is that history did not bear out authors who raised the alarm and sounded the tocsin. This, however, does not mean they were fundamentally wrong. For example, the flaws in the British army identified by Chesney endured long after his death. There is little doubt that had the German and British armies collided under the circumstances he describes, the forces of the kaiser would have triumphed. As it was, however, the Royal Navy kept potential continental enemies at bay, and a British policy of avoiding European entanglements bought the time required between 1871 and 1914 to modernize and gradually create a truly modern army.

The case for Hackett’s *The Third World War* is more difficult to make. There is much less consensus on what would have been the results of a NATO/Warsaw Pact clash; thankfully, history has ensured that it will remain a question without an answer. Nor is it possible, by any means, to feel sanguine about such a conflict’s not escalating to a global nuclear exchange. What gave Hackett’s writing such power was that his warning was seen at the time as timely and plausible.

Events have borne out Dunlap’s “Coup of 2012” even less. The U.S. military, grounded from its creation in the notion of subordination to civil authorities, has indeed become more involved in operations other than war. However, these operations are nothing new; they have been part of the services’ mission set since the Revolutionary War. There have been outspoken flag officers before, and there undoubtedly will be again. In these cases, the American system has been self-correcting. Dunlap’s piece was well timed and well written, and it reflected responsible concern over the future employment of U.S. forces. But as a prescient warning of impending danger, it has been shown to be excessive and wrong.

At present, Richard Clarke’s writing seems in retrospect to have more in common with that of Dunlap than of Chesney. Terrorist actions against American targets have occurred neither when nor how Clarke predicted they would. Yet it

would be dangerous to dismiss Clarke's writing altogether. There are still several years to go before his ten-year leap into the future is truly history. Al-Qa'ida remains active, and its opposition to the United States is unabated. Despite the absence of a major attack in the United States since 2001, efforts to strengthen U.S. defenses continue. Thus while it appears that Clarke may have overstated his case, it is far too early to discard his warning.

This leaves the Seers—Bywater, with his *The Great Pacific War*, and Vickers, with *The Trenches*. Although only running sixteen pages, Vickers's work depicts the classic World War I battlefield with a high degree of fidelity. In his vision, machines, especially automatic weapons and modern artillery, force men to dig for their survival and accept a subterranean existence as a military necessity. This results in a nearly unbreakable battlefield status quo. In order to gain victory, a way must be found to close the range between the trench lines. On battlefields dominated by machines, only other machines can perform this feat.<sup>23</sup> Vickers correctly identifies the characteristics necessary for the machine that is needed: the vehicle must be armored, to survive on the fire-swept field; it must be tracked, to navigate a blasted, torn, and potentially muddy terrain; and it must be powered by an internal combustion engine, to be able to move the armor it carries and drive its tracks. Furthermore, it must be manned, because its operations will require human intelligence to succeed.

Given how well Vickers developed this futuristic vehicle, it is surprising that he missed a further, and last, essential characteristic and a more obvious strategy: a gun that would have turned the tractor into a tank, and a strategy of assaulting head-on rather than advancing entrenchments. It might be that as an engineer he was naturally inclined to think about fortifications and entrenchments. Still, as a foreshadowing of the reality of the First World War, *The Trenches* comes very close indeed.

Finally, we have Bywater and *The Great Pacific War*, and it deserves special attention. Although his timeline was off by a decade, Bywater correctly anticipated the strategic course of World War II in the Pacific. In his book the war is initiated by a bold and undeclared Japanese strike.<sup>24</sup> Bywater's Japanese invasion of the Philippines is all but identical to the actual operation later conducted by the Japanese. Bywater anticipates a gallant defense of one of the U.S.-held islands (Guam in his case, versus history's Wake). The United States is forced to adopt an island-hopping strategy, and in the end American industry, once placed on a war footing, overwhelms its Japanese counterpart. Aircraft and submarines play important roles in the war, even if the main naval battles in Bywater are Mahanian in nature. Taken all together, the effect is remarkable.

How did Bywater get his war so right? First, he understood the tyranny of geography. A Pacific war would place the Japanese in a strong strategic defensive

position, especially if they could quickly seize, fortify, and operate from distant island chains. Bywater also understood local hydrographic conditions; a study of the Philippines reveals only a few places suitable for large amphibious operations. Bywater also recognized that an island-hopping campaign, not a direct assault, offered the best chance to defeat a Japanese opponent. Bywater further saw how quickly the industrial potential of the United States could be harnessed and how quickly Japanese efforts to maintain parity would be overcome. Thus a large part of the credit for Bywater's prescience can be attributed to his experience with naval matters and his perception of the future battlefield.

There is as well a more personal, but yet still possible, reason for Bywater's accuracy. As has been mentioned, American naval planners, following the publication of Bywater's book, did modify War Plan ORANGE. Among other things, they increased the protection afforded the Panama Canal and adopted an island-hopping strategy in case of war with Japan. In the same period, the Japanese naval attaché to Great Britain, Captain Isoroku Yamamoto, spent an entire evening discussing the book with Bywater (over a bottle of scotch). In 1941, Admiral Yamamoto would, as commander in chief of the Combined Fleet, effectively run the Japanese navy. It was he who had the idea of an initial strike against the U.S. Pacific Fleet in Hawaii. Is it possible that Bywater's book, grounded in geographic reality and studied by both future combatants, became in this respect a self-fulfilling prophecy? Unfortunately, Bywater's life has spawned something of a cottage industry of conspiracy theories, so it is difficult to pursue this line of inquiry much farther.<sup>25</sup>

What, then, are some general conclusions that can be derived from this subgenre of literature? First, while this eccentric subgenre of literature is small in size, there is no reason to believe it is extinct. Given the historical track record, a major addition to the volume of work can be expected at least once a decade. Each will have a reasonable chance of success and may even become the "talk of the (policy) town."

Second, categorizing the authors of such works as Prometheans, Cassandrans, and Seers is a viable approach. The material highlighted here as well as additional works in this genre all fit within these categories. In addition, the categories clearly capture the general thrust of the various writings.

Third, Seers, Prometheans, and Cassandrans all reflect the security angst of their times. However, no one in any of these groups has been able truly to shatter the event horizon, in that contemporary political alignments, weapons systems, and other realities have prevented the accurate envisioning of a distant future. Thus the farther the event horizon, the less likely the author is to be correct.

Fourth, some fairly reliable “weighting” patterns emerge that make this methodology useful to the security analyst—in fact to anyone with an interest in future military planning, strategy, or forces:

- The Seers are more likely to be correct than either the Cassandrans or the Prometheans.
- The Prometheans are likely to identify important emerging weapons systems, tactics, and technologies correctly but are likely to overstate their value.
- Cassandrans are highly likely to be wrong, and future examples of this genre should be taken with a very large grain of salt. But it is this very lack of success that makes the Cassandrans’ writings so interesting.

Although this article has confined itself to writings by past security professionals, the value of a more comprehensive awareness among today’s security professionals of the larger field of predictive military literature should not be immediately discounted; Arthur Conan Doyle’s short story “Danger,” for instance, ranks as one of the more accurate Promethean accounts. It may well be, in fact, that writers without the cultural blinders and organizational baggage typical of military and political experts will be able to sense more accurately the shape of the future. In an era in which even the most traditional security professional acknowledges the impact of asymmetric forces, such insights may be more useful than ever.

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#### NOTES

This article would never have been written were it not that several years ago I designed and cotaught an elective course of study entitled “Future Wars” at the Naval War College. My partner in that effort was Lieutenant Colonel Patrick Donahoe, U.S. Army, a remarkable soldier and scholar.

1. I am indebted to the pioneering work of Professor I. F. Clarke, former professor of English studies at the University of Strathclyde. Professor Clarke has produced several books on the subject of literary efforts to predict conflict, including *Voices Prophesying War: Future Wars 1763–3749*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1992), and *The Tale of the Next Great War 1871–1914: Fictions of Future Warfare and Battles Still-To-Come* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse Univ. Press, 1996).

Looking at some of the same works as this article, Dr. Clarke is more concerned with the broader field of apocalyptic literature and does not confine his studies to material created by security professionals only.

2. While Chesney scrupulously avoids identifying the Germans as such, his description of troop types, equipment, and tactics leaves no doubt as to the nationality of the invaders.
3. Chesney dealt with the pesky problem of British maritime superiority by inventing a crisis in the Mediterranean Sea that draws off sufficient naval assets to allow the enemy to land his invading army intact.
4. An excellent example of a naval Cassandra account is Capt. S. Eardley-Wilmot’s *The Next Naval War* (London: Edward Stanford,

1894). Eardley-Wilmot tells the tale of a French victory, primarily through the use of subterfuge, mines, and torpedoes, over the Royal Navy. Four editions of the book were eventually published.

5. Like many of these writings, *In a Conning Tower* also, almost inadvertently, enters the realm of social engineering. Oakley-Foster's piece reduces the crew of the ironclad to near automatons, performing individual functions with machinelike reliability and being replaced when damaged or destroyed. The only personality that matters, the only human whose feelings may be taken into account, is the captain, whose experience, courage, and decision-making capacity constitute the brains and spirit of the ship.
6. Clarke, *Tale of the Next Great War*, p. 377.
7. Douhet's *Il dominio dell'aria* (*Command of the Air*) was originally published in 1921.
8. Interestingly, while the airpower Prometheans acknowledged the growing role of armor on the battlefield and the armor Prometheans did likewise for the growing power of the aircraft, each saw the other as either a supporting or ancillary force. Thus, proponents of blitzkrieg tended to avoid popular fiction as a means of advancing their arguments.
9. H. E. Graham, *The Battle of Dora* (London: William Clowes and Sons, 1931); and Major Holders [Robert Knauss], *The War in the Air 1936* (London: John Hamilton, 1932).
10. Graham's work was in all likelihood doomed from the start. *The Battle of Dora* is one of the worst-written pieces in the entire genre. Characters are barely one-dimensional, the humor is forced, the writing uninspired. While a careful reading does produce useful bits of information and nuggets of insight, the book is hard sledding. Mercifully, it is rather short, running to only seventy-five pages.
11. All of these elements of naval combat were the subject of debate at the time. Entrenched naval leaders believed that the submarine and aircraft were predominantly scouting vehicles and that the Gallipoli campaign of the First World War had proved the limitations of sea-borne invasion forces.
12. Robert R. Rigg, *War—1974* (Harrisburg, Pa.: Military Service, 1958).
13. General Gavin, Rigg's superior, was not among these. "Pentomic" referred to the new organizational pattern—five rifle companies in a "battle group," five battle groups in a division, etc.
14. General Sir John Hackett, *The Third World War August 1985: A Future History* (New York: Macmillan, 1978).
15. From a literary point of view, the limited nuclear portion of Hackett's war, essentially a Russian-initiated trade of Birmingham for Minsk, represents one of the most artificial and forced portions of the book.
16. James Brown, "Challenges and Uncertainty: NATO's Southern Flank," *Air University Review* (May–June 1980), available at [www.airpower.au.af.mil/airchronicles/](http://www.airpower.au.af.mil/airchronicles/).
17. Charles J. Dunlap, Jr., "The Coup of 2012," *Parameters* (Winter 1992–93), pp. 2–20.
18. Richard A. Clarke, "Ten Years Later," *Atlantic* 295, no. 1 (January–February 2005), pp. 61–77.
19. This is most certainly not to imply that such an attack is now impossible.
20. This genre has been exclusively populated to date by male authors.
21. In fairness, the jury could said to be still out in the case of Richard Clarke's "Ten Years Later," although his future time has so far proved inaccurate.
22. Considering that he survived the war and spent some time in a French prisoner-of-war camp, it is possible General Knauss's self-justification might also have had a somewhat rueful component.
23. In his own way Vickers acknowledges the role that U.S. manufacturing capabilities will play in future wars, if not perhaps in the First World War.
24. Hector C. Bywater, *The Great Pacific War: A History of the American-Japanese Campaign of 1931–33* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1925; repr. New York: St. Martin's, 1991), p. 22 (of 1925 ed.).
25. See William H. Honan, *Bywater: The Man Who Invented the Pacific War* (London: MacDonald, 1990).

## REVIEW ESSAY

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### THE ESSENTIAL AFRICA READER

*Stephen A. Emerson*

Dr. Stephen A. Emerson is an African-affairs specialist with over twenty-five years of experience working on African political and security issues. He currently teaches security, strategy, and forces (SSF) and strategy and theater security (STS) at the Naval War College. Prior to joining the NWC faculty, Emerson worked for the U.S. Department of Defense as a political-military analyst for southern Africa, and was Chair of Security Studies at the Africa Center for Strategic Studies. His professional interests include southern African studies, conflict and political instability, and American foreign and security policy in the developing world. Emerson is the author of numerous studies as well as governmental and academic articles on African politics, U.S.-African policy, and intelligence issues. He holds a PhD in political science and comparative politics, and an MA in international relations from the University of Florida.

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Chan, Stephen. *Grasping Africa: A Tale of Tragedy and Achievement*. London: I. B. Tauris, 2007. 224pp. \$32

Ayittey, George. *Africa Unchained: The Blueprint for Africa's Future*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005. 512pp. \$19.95

Events in Africa, from the killing fields of eastern Congo and Darfur to the remote reaches of the Niger Delta and the slums of Nairobi, are increasingly capturing the limelight. Africa matters now more than ever to the United States. Given this new reality, escalating American involvement on the continent will undoubtedly be a defining hallmark in future decades for both the United States and African countries. Whether or not this engagement is ultimately successful, however, will largely depend on how well the United States understands the continent and its people.

To that end, I am frequently asked to recommend the one magical book that “explains Africa.” Since no such book exists, the next best thing is to provide a short list of essential works addressing key trends and themes that have helped shape the continent of today.<sup>1</sup> The challenge here is to identify books that provide a balanced picture of Africa’s triumphs and tragedies; highlight the continent’s diversity, while recognizing common interests and challenges; and capture the heart and soul of the land, its people, and the African spirit—that unique and often unfathomable resilience and optimism that has shown itself in the face of enormous adversity. That is the quest I have undertaken here.

There are a number of excellent, meticulous studies of African history.<sup>2</sup> *The Washing of the Spears*, by Donald R. Morris, looks at the rise to prominence of the Zulu kingdom in the early nineteenth century and its inevitable confrontation in southern Africa with imperial Britain. It is a must-read for many reasons. That a seemingly “primitive” people could defeat on the field of battle at Isandhlwana in 1879 the most powerful and professional military of its day speaks to the resourcefulness and innovativeness that would come to define African resistance to European colonialism. Just as important, Zulu nation-building, beginning in 1817, set in motion a series of incidents (the *mfecane*, or crushing) that has been called “one of the great formative events in African history.”<sup>3</sup> The *mfecane* would dramatically transform the demographic, political, and social terrains of southern and eastern Africa and have repercussions that still linger nearly two hundred years later.

Another classic, Alan Moorehead’s *The White Nile*, examines early European fascination with the “dark continent” in the run-up to the scramble for Africa through the eyes of such famous explorers as Richard Burton, John Hanning Speke, and Samuel Baker. It also contrasts the motivations of the humanist David Livingstone with those of the American adventurer Henry Morton Stanley. Ostensibly an account of the exploration of the Nile, it is much more, providing as it does the rich historical context of many of today’s pressing and intertwined challenges in Sudan, Chad, Egypt, and Uganda. Reading the chapters on Charles Gordon, the rise of Mahdism, the Muslim revolt, and the reconquest of Sudan in 1898 will reveal a direct, bright line to the current issues of Islamic extremism, the southern Sudan question, and Darfur.

Thomas Pakenham's *The Scramble for Africa* retraces the "great game" in Africa in the latter half of the nineteenth century, when the continent became—and not for the last time—a venue for great-power competition and conflict. The potent imperial cocktail of "God, glory, and gold" fueled a colonial onslaught that would bring the nations of Europe to the brink of war on more than one occasion and reshape Africa forever. Pakenham's behind-the-scenes look at the Berlin Conference of 1884–85 examines the personal and geopolitical factors driving the partition of the continent. The result of these machinations would be an enduring legacy of ill-conceived colonial borders and artificial African states that still exist today.

No one benefited more from the Berlin Conference than Belgium's King Leopold II. Adam Hochschild's vividly descriptive *King Leopold's Ghost* recounts Leopold's ruthless quest from 1885 to 1908 to exploit the riches of the Congo. The result, according to the novelist Joseph Conrad, was "the vilest scramble for loot that ever disfigured the history of the human conscience" (p. 4). Leopold became a very rich man (with a fortune of, conservatively, \$1.1 billion in today's dollars), but at enormous human cost—about half the territory's population was killed or died as a result of starvation, exposure, or disease during his rape of the Congo. Independence from Belgium in 1960 brought little relief. The Congo's colonial masters were simply replaced by a succession of African kleptocrats who (often with Western support) continued to plunder the country and produce massive human suffering. The horror continues. The smoldering ten-year-old conflict for power and control of natural resources in the eastern Congo has left up to five million people dead in what has become Africa's forgotten war.

Unfortunately, the Congo is not alone. The global rush to tap Africa's resources, which increasingly fuel the economies of the world, has been a critical source of conflict and instability across the continent. The ivory, gold, slaves, and rubber of old have been replaced with cobalt, coltan, diamonds, timber, and, most of all, oil. Oil, Africa's blessing and curse, has become an American addiction: African oil imports to the United States now top 20 percent, surpassing Middle Eastern imports in 2007. Nicholas Shaxson's *Poisoned Wells: The Dirty Politics of African Oil* is an unflattering inside look at the impact of oil as a divider of African society.<sup>4</sup> Using a journalistic style, Shaxson takes the reader on a remarkable journey from the wood-paneled boardrooms of Houston, London, Paris, and Geneva to the sweltering heat of the Gulf of Guinea. Along the way one encounters a vast array of corrupt Western and African officials, manipulative businessmen and politicians, and the economics of dirty money. What is astounding is not that the oil business in Africa is, and has long been, an insider's game, shrouded in secrecy, fueled by personal ambitions, and riddled with

corruption, but the sheer magnitude of the corruption and the cost to African societies. By some estimates Nigeria has lost through corruption and mismanagement over half the \$600 billion it has earned since it first started pumping oil in 1956, and for all the nation's wealth the average citizen survives on less than a dollar a day.<sup>5</sup> Rather than the exception, this seems to be the rule. Nigeria and other major oil producers Angola and Sudan rank in the bottom fifth of the UN Development Index.

Although first published over thirty years ago, Alistair Horne's *A Savage War of Peace: Algeria 1954–1962* remains a must-read on multiple levels for those grappling with today's security challenges in Africa. It provides, first and foremost, an insightful analysis of the bloody Algerian anticolonial struggle that was to become the prototype for wars of liberation in Africa. The conflict took over a million lives, permanently displaced another million, and shook the French Republic to its core. The book remains relevant today because of its implications for the current war on terror. It is highly popular in official Washington circles, although many misguided inferences appear to have been drawn from it, including the rationalization that ends justify the means. In the revised 1996 edition, Horne perceptively links the war and its aftermath to the rise of Algerian international jihadists, by demonstrating the globalized nature of domestic and international security challenges.

If Horne's work is a tale of woe and gloom for the future of independent Africa, Nelson Mandela's autobiography, *Long Walk to Freedom*, provides rays of inspiration and hope for what Africa could be. Begun clandestinely in 1974 while Mandela was imprisoned on Robben Island (the apartheid regime's Alcatraz for hard-core political prisoners), the book paints a detailed picture of his life and the events that would transform him into South Africa's first majority-rule president in 1994. From his birth in rural Transkei in 1918, of royal Xhosa lineage, and through a typical African childhood on the veldt, one accompanies Mandela on his journey of political awakening in the South Africa of the 1940s and 1950s. Through this introspective portrait, the reader gains a greater appreciation of the values and events that shaped his life and personal philosophy. In his deeply held respect for rural traditions and customs, his sense of duty and loyalty, and his growing frustration with a political system that denied fundamental rights to the majority of its citizens, one sees a man transformed into a powerful political figure and inspirational leader in the fight against apartheid. The reader is also introduced to the statesman who, as president, was committed to reconciliation and looking to the future: "I would not mince words about the horrors of apartheid, but I said, over and over, that we should forget the past and concentrate on building a better future for all" (p. 535).

Taken together, Paul Nugent's *Africa since Independence: A Comparative History* and Peter Schraeder's *African Politics and Society: A Mosaic in Transformation* represent a sweeping yet thoughtful look at the key factors underpinning the political, social, and economic development of modern Africa. Moreover, although taking very different epistemological approaches to the task, both do highly effective jobs, building solid historical contexts for their critical explorations of the challenges facing Africa today. Whether in Nugent's critical analysis of democratic trends or Schraeder's examination of the role of ethnicity and class, the reader sees that history, culture, and societal context matter. (One wishes that many of those reporting on the 2007 postelection violence in Kenya had taken the time to read Schraeder's analysis of ethnicity and class in Africa.)

So, what is to be done? Stephen Chan's readable yet profound *Grasping Africa: A Tale of Tragedy and Achievement* does a powerful job of portraying the human side of African problems and offers a bottom-up approach to improving the condition of Africa. That approach envisions "more than distribution tables and aid requirements. It is about something very great in the face of tragedy" (p. xi). To Chan and many others, addressing the continent's problems, which are fundamentally rooted in the lack of economic development and individual empowerment, requires solutions that speak to improving the condition of ordinary Africans. Although espousing largely an African-centric approach, Chan believes the world can help give Africa a fighting chance by lifting restrictive and detrimental trade policies.

Reaching largely the same conclusion, the distinguished if controversial Ghanaian economist George Ayittey in *Africa Unchained: The Blueprint for Africa's Future* meticulously walks the reader through the numbers and leadership failures that underlie the continent's malaise. For Ayittey the remedy is simple—it is the little guy. It is to be found in African indigenous economic institutions that have long existed: "All that is required is to take what is there, build or improve upon the existing institutions, and unleash the creative and entrepreneurial energies of the African people" (p. 398). Ayittey, however, readily acknowledges that even this straightforward task will be difficult to accomplish without significant reforms in the international system and the donor community. Also, he warns, entrenched domestic interests of the "hippo generation" of old-line African leaders will be resistant to change.

Taken together, this collection of books paints a stark portrait of a continent that has suffered much, not only at the hands of outsiders but of its own doing as well. The Africa of today, for better or worse, is a manifestation of this historical legacy, but its future certainly is not bound by it. While these books tell a tale of violence, despair, and man's inhumanity to man, they also show resilience and persistence in the face of often insurmountable odds. They show an Africa

increasingly willing to accept responsibility for its future while acknowledging the need for a helping hand and understanding from the rest of the world. A new generation of African leaders and average citizens is fighting to achieve life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Perhaps we as Americans have more in common with our African brethren than we realize after all.

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#### NOTES

1. My self-imposed parameters for selecting these “essential works” were: nonfiction only (while acknowledging that many excellent works of fiction address important African issues and themes), no textbook-style books (as a group they provide a continental perspective), enduring themes and major trends, relevance to today, and a maximum of ten books. Although the bulk of these criteria is admittedly subjective, I believe they provided effective guidance in the selection process. Only on the last point did I fail—there are eleven books on the list.
2. See, for example, Basil Davidson, *A History of Africa*, rev. ed. (New York: Macmillan, 1974); John Reader, *Africa: A Biography of the Continent* (New York: Knopf, 1988); or the multi-volume work A. E. Afigbo et al., *The Making of Modern Africa* (New York: Longman, 1986) as historical reference works.
3. In the words of famed southern African historian J. D. Omer-Cooper, as cited in T. R. H. Davenport, *South Africa: A Modern History* (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1977), p. 10.
4. See also John Ghazvinian, *Untapped: The Scramble for Africa’s Oil* (Orlando, Fla.: Harcourt, 2007), reviewed in *Naval War College Review* 60, no. 4 (Autumn 2007), pp. 142–43, for a similar analysis.
5. “Documenting the Paradox of Oil, Poverty in Nigeria,” Weekend Edition Sunday, NPR, 6 July 2008. See also [www.publishwhatyoupay.org](http://www.publishwhatyoupay.org) for a look at efforts to promote transparency in the oil sector.

## BOOK REVIEWS

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### WHAT IS THE KEY TO VICTORY?

Desch, Michael C. *Power and Military Effectiveness: The Fallacy of Democratic Triumphalism*. Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 2008. 232pp. \$45

The notion that “democracies don’t fight one another” is well known, but recently some scholars have made a stronger claim—that when democracies do fight wars, their battlefield effectiveness is far greater than that of nondemocracies with comparable technology and training.

Michael Desch challenges the supposed military prowess of democracies in his book *Power and Military Effectiveness: The Fallacy of Democratic Triumphalism*. Desch, a political scientist, holds the Robert M. Gates Chair in Intelligence and National Security Decision-Making at Texas A&M University and is an authority on civil-military relations. His past work argues that it is strategic interests, not regime types, that determine a nation’s security policy. His latest book extends that theme by delivering a convincing rebuttal to what he calls the “democratic triumphalists.”

The case of the “triumphalists” rests upon statistical analyses showing that democracies have been more likely to win wars than other political systems over the last two hundred years. Desch challenges these studies head on,

arguing that in most cases the democracies in question would have been expected to win in any case, due to traditional military advantages (the United States in the 1991 Gulf war) or to motivation, national survival being on the line (Israel in 1973), and that in other cases there may have been errors and uncertainties in the data sets themselves. To prove his point, Desch offers four case studies: the Russo-Polish War (1919–20), the battle for France (1940), the Falklands War (1982), and Israel’s wars from 1948 to 1982. These case studies trace the details of governmental decision making and the military operations of each conflict, showing that the factors identified by the triumphalists were not the key drivers of battlefield outcomes.

The combination of quantitative analysis and case studies is notable. Few authors are comfortable working in both methods, but Desch demonstrates both methodological sophistication and a command of military history. However, one might ask for a more thorough exploration of a few issues. One example is how quick Desch is to dismiss the

possibility that democracies grow faster economically than other regimes and thus accumulate more resources in the long run. Such questions are minor, though, and the overall case is quite persuasive.

This book is a must for scholars of military effectiveness or civil-military relations. The statistical sections will satisfy researchers; they might be a bit difficult for general readers, but overall the work should interest a broad audience of national security professionals. Desch's writing is excellent throughout, with lively case studies and clear explanations of his theories and results.

One hopes that policy makers will read this book. As Desch notes, democratic triumphalism has become popular in Washington. The mistaken belief that democracy itself is a "force multiplier" could lead officials to underestimate the risks of U.S. interventions or to encourage unduly weak but democratic U.S. allies. Desch offers a warning that it is superior strategy, resources, and skill, not the magic bullet of democracy, that remain the keys to victory.

DAVID BURBACH  
Naval War College



Doyle, Michael. *Striking First: Preemption and Prevention in International Conflict*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 2008. 200pp. \$24.95

Even before the United States and its allies embarked on war in Iraq in 2003, the question of whether it is acceptable to strike enemies without clear provocation was an increasingly vexing one to policy makers, academics, and legal experts. "Preemptive war" (attacking an enemy who is clearly about to strike

you first) has always been an acceptable response to a dire and clear threat. But "preventive war" (striking a potential enemy while circumstances are favorable to the attacker, or striking in early anticipation of a possible, or even only theoretical, threat) has traditionally been regarded in the international community as not only unwise but immoral.

In this slim, tightly reasoned volume, one of America's foremost foreign-policy thinkers tackles the problem of preventive war and reaches surprising conclusions. While rejecting the so-called Bush Doctrine, which putatively grants to the United States almost unlimited permission to attack almost any threat in any form, Doyle delivers a clear warning that the previous rules of war do not apply in the twenty-first century. Doyle struggles (as have other scholars in many nations over the past decade) to find criteria that would allow preventive attacks in an internationally acceptable framework. He settles on four criteria: lethality, likelihood, legitimacy, and legality.

The book is actually a collection of essays by four other scholars, who supply a foreword and criticism of Doyle's chapters, to which Doyle responds in a conclusion. The debate format is lively and makes this work a particularly useful tool for introducing students at advanced levels to the subject.

Although Doyle's prose is direct and clear, in places he makes overly structured arguments, and his attempt to set his four criteria into a matrix produces something more like a rigid template. Doyle certainly recognizes that the perception of a threat, versus the actual threat, is often idiosyncratic and affected by a slew of factors, but his

criteria are more likely to make sense after the fact than at the outset of action. The moral questions he raises are, and should be, crucial to policy makers, but his framework is more suitable as an after-action analysis than as a guide to preventive attack.

That said, *Striking First* is an excellent, thought-provoking, and highly readable volume, indispensable for both specialists and interested general readers. No future discussions of this problem (and there will be many) can afford to ignore Michael Doyle's contribution.

THOMAS NICHOLS  
Naval War College



Mahnken, Thomas G., and Joseph A. Maiolo, eds. *Strategic Studies: A Reader*. New York: Routledge, 2008. 464pp. \$49.95

Tom Mahnken and Joseph Maiolo will not be unfamiliar to readers of the *Naval War College Review* or to students of strategy and policy. Mahnken, a former professor at the Naval War College, is currently visiting fellow and professional lecturer in the Strategic Studies Program at the Johns Hopkins University Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies; Maiolo is a senior lecturer in war studies at King's College London. Seeking to enhance the teaching of this important subject, Mahnken and Maiolo have put together a collection of previously published essays on the theory and practice of strategic studies.

This collection is wide ranging, both topically and chronologically. It begins by examining the uses of strategic theory, with essays by Bernard Brodie, Lawrence Freedman, and William C.

Fuller, Jr. The second section examines the "classics," with selections from Sun Tzu, Basil Liddell Hart, and Thomas Schelling. A look at conventional warfare on land, sea, and air is found in the third section, in articles by Richard Overy, Brian Holden Reid (on J. F. C. Fuller), and Daniel Byman and Matthew Waxman on airpower in Kosovo, along with a selection of Julian Corbett's *Some Principles of Maritime Strategy*. Nuclear strategy is not neglected, with a selection from Bernard Brodie's *The Absolute Weapon* and Albert Wohlstetter's famous article "Delicate Balance of Terror." The fifth, and by far the largest, section is on irregular warfare and small wars. The essays here are both new and old classics: T. E. Lawrence, Mao Tse-tung, David Galula, David Kilcullen, Andrew Mack (on big nations losing small wars), and Peter Neumann and M. L. R. Smith (on strategic terrorism). To conclude, there are essays by Andrew Krepinevich, Michael Evans, Colin Gray, Adam Roberts, and Hew Strachan (all since 2003), which engage the future of conflict and of strategy making.

One should not quibble too much with the editors' selections (or omissions); Mahnken and Maiolo acknowledge from the outset that space prevented them from including all they wished. Still, some readers may question the description of strategy that Mahnken and Maiolo offer in their introduction. By strategy they largely mean *military*, rather than national or grand, strategy, but they do not specify. In a collection such as this, a more precise explanation of strategy at the beginning would have been helpful for framing the collection's essays. Nonetheless, this text will be extremely useful as a starting point for

professional military education on this topic. The editors are to be commended.

JONATHAN WINKLER  
Wright State University  
Dayton, Ohio



Stavridis, James. *Destroyer Captain: Lessons of a First Command*. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 2008. 224pp. \$22.95

The politically correct aspiration for all surface warfare officers is to attain to command at sea. Realistically, these officers cannot begin to comprehend all its ramifications, but they viscerally know it is the Holy Grail. Reading Admiral Jim Stavridis's *Destroyer Captain* is about as close as these officers will come to enjoying the ride until they actually receive their orders to command. It is our great fortune that then-commander Stavridis scrupulously kept a journal during his days aboard USS *Barry* (DDG 52) (1993–95) and has offered to share his experiences with us.

James Stavridis is prolific on this subject, having written extensively on life at sea for the naval professional. Such earlier works as *Watch Officer's Guide* (editor, 1999) and *Command at Sea* (with William Mack, 1999) now serve as textbooks. *Destroyer Captain*, however, is designed to be a good read for anyone fascinated with what life is like behind the doors of the captain's cabin. Fortunately, Stavridis is a writer who is not only good with the small details of daily life but shares a sense of history and awe of the sea. Simply, he is in love with command at sea, and you feel it throughout the entire book.

Stavridis does not purport to tell new destroyer skippers that there is one correct way to succeed at their job, but he has tried to keep to the basics. The "ends" are mandated: the ship should be ready for war. The "means" is where a captain's personality turns seemingly identical structures into radically different habitats. Stavridis adheres to simplicity. Serve good food. Walk around. Have a plan. Smile.

Stavridis, currently the regional combatant commander of Southern Command, was the second skipper of *Barry*. His predecessor, today Admiral Gary Roughead, is the Chief of Naval Operations.

A particularly poignant piece is his account of the tragic death of Admiral Jay Prout, a friend and mentor and always an ebullient companion. Prout had a trademark of passing to friends en route to command a paperback about the exploits of a Royal Navy destroyer skipper who had three ships shot out from under him during the Second World War. He called that book motivation for a successful command. We can place *Destroyer Captain* on the same list.

TOM FEDYSZYN  
Naval War College



Cliff, Roger, et al. *Entering the Dragon's Lair: Chinese Antiaccess Strategies and Their Implications for the United States*. Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND, 2007. 154pp. \$27.50

This study has already attracted widespread attention from the policy community and media, for good reason. The U.S. military appears poised to face challenges to its ability to maintain access to a variety of regional littoral

areas, such as in the Persian Gulf. It is time for American planners to view the rising antiaccess challenge as part of a global problem that may require significant restructuring of U.S. platforms, deployment, diplomacy, and even, in a worst case, strategy and tactics.

The authors have produced the first major study that evaluates comprehensively the specific antiaccess methods being discussed by Chinese military strategists. They bring to bear a wide variety of relevant doctrinal and analytic materials (many of which they themselves have translated) and explain clearly their relative authority. The authors' conclusion is sobering: in the unfortunate event of a Taiwan Strait conflict, China's military may consider launching a rapid surprise attack. Such a first strike could damage and render ineffective a wide variety of U.S. military platforms (aircraft carrier strike groups—which are described as having special vulnerabilities—and assets at regional bases). This could deny U.S. forces effective "access" to sea and air space to China's east, leaving Taiwan vulnerable to military coercion and testing American resolve. The authors term this growing zone "the Dragon's Lair." While the United States would retain significant military forces regardless of the outcome of such a conflict, China might be able to achieve specific military and political objectives at America's expense.

An enduring challenge for analyses of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) is distinguishing between aspirations and capabilities. The authors do their best to differentiate between the two, and they deserve great credit for addressing seriously a set of issues on which there has been insufficient open analysis.

While the continued lack of transparency makes it difficult to determine the PLA's precise capabilities, long-established technical expertise and focus on the development of such weapons as missiles and related technologies suggest considerable potential on China's part. The authors offer, in light of their findings, a wide variety of specific policy recommendations, which should be considered carefully. However, the expense, difficulties (largely because of inherent physics-based limitations), and side effects potentially associated with some of them—and indeed the ruinous nature of any U.S.-China conflict—make it vital to consider the larger strategic context as well.

Conflict over Taiwan is the only readily imaginable scenario in which the United States and China could have a kinetic military exchange today. This unfortunate contingency, already only a remote one, has been rendered more so by the March 2008 Taiwan election and President Ma Ying-jeou's constructive approach to cross-strait relations. Continued U.S. presence and influence in strategic regions of East Asia, which Beijing has not challenged directly in public, will remain an important subject for American policy makers, as well as for bilateral and multilateral discussion. Even as the two nations cooperate, there will undoubtedly be areas of contention. But there is no reason at this point to fear that war is imminent, and every reason to believe that each side's coercive capabilities can deter the outcome that each most fears.

ANDREW ERICKSON  
*Naval War College*



Cole, Bernard D. *Sea Lanes and Pipelines: Energy Security in Asia*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 2008. 280pp. \$75

This book, written by a retired Navy captain and professor of international history at the National War College, provides an up-to-date summary of the movement of energy resources in and around Asia, of the concurrent buildup of naval power in the region to protect that movement, and of strategies employed by Asian nations to ensure the safe and secure transport of energy resources.

Bernard Cole is well versed on the subject, drawing upon his thirty-year naval career, all served in the Pacific, and his obvious focus and research on naval and energy issues in Asia. His extensive notes and bibliography constitute almost a fourth of the book, showing the breadth and width of Cole's research and sources.

While the title implies a focus on both sea-lanes and pipelines, actually more time and space are allocated to maritime issues. Cole explains in his introduction that "no form of transporting oil is more important than the sea" and that "the role of naval force on the seas provides the primary vehicle from which the question of the military security of Asia's energy supplies is viewed."

Conceding that energy security cannot be addressed individually for each nation, Cole recognizes globalization as a fact of life and thus holds that the transport of energy via sea-lanes, "the commons," must be addressed from a regional perspective—in this case, that of Asia. The book is divided into chapters specifically by issues, and within

each chapter Cole examines each issue on a country-by-country basis.

Cole builds issue upon issue, to include the geography of the region and the resultant physical problem of the secure sea lines of communication; the energy sources within Asia; and the problems of transporting energy to and from there. He ends with a look at multilateralism and various international organizations that may influence maritime issues in Asia, as well as a profile of individual countries and their anticipated changes vis-à-vis energy security and freedom of the seas.

The previously mentioned "up-to-date summary" lends a time-sensitive nature to the book. Cole takes the time to explain the necessary background and history, but he is quite aware that the value of current data is subject to atrophy as time passes. An update will certainly be warranted in a couple of years if this book is to remain relevant.

JAMES P. LEWIS  
Naval War College



Lawrence, Quil. *Invisible Nation: How the Kurds' Quest for Statehood Is Shaping Iraq and the Middle East*. New York: Walker, 2008. 288pp. \$25.95

Marcus, Aliza. *Blood and Belief: The PKK and the Kurdish Fight for Independence*. New York: New York Univ. Press, 2007. 368pp. \$35

While the establishment of the nation-state as the preeminent system for political and social integration has led to the benefit of many social groups, it has led to the disaffection of others. The Kurds, who for centuries have acted as political pawns and mercenaries, have arguably benefited the least. Even now, with a population estimated at twenty-eight

million, the Kurds remain divided among four separate countries—northern Iraq, northeastern Syria, southeast Turkey, and western Iran.

Literature on the Kurds is extensive, and, as suggested from the publication of the books reviewed here, it is likely to grow. What that means in terms of greater visibility for the Kurds or the enhancement of their rights remains to be seen. If the pen is indeed mightier than the sword, Kurdophiles will welcome any expansion of their documented trials and tribulations, which date back to the early 1800s.

*Invisible Nation* focuses on the Kurds' experience in Iraq, with particular attention to their plight under Saddam Hussein and to their role in constructing a democratic Iraq, post-Saddam and the Baathists. The implicit question is whether Kurdistan is, or will ever be, an independent country, de facto or de jure. Lawrence's chronology of events touches upon various aspects of the problem, such as the long-standing party factionalism among Iraqi Kurds (Talabani's PUK versus Barzani's KDP) and a wide array of cabals and conspiracies with Iraq's other social groups (Sunni Arabs, Shiite Arabs, Assyrians, Turkomans) and neighbors. Following a brief introduction to Kurdish history, Lawrence moves quickly to the middle of the twentieth century, where the reader learns details of the Kurdish struggle for self-determination, whether as part of an independent Kurdistan or an autonomous region within Iraq.

Lawrence is an excellent writer, but his depiction of events seems at times anecdotal, based on his trips to Kurdistan as a reporter and on his sampling of informants. Contributing to that feel is what appears to be arbitrary footnoting of

sources and declarations. Yet the book flows nicely and offers insight from diverse elements of Kurdish society.

*Blood and Belief* is a different kind of book altogether. It too follows a chronological approach, but its time span is shorter and its topic—the creation and evolution of the PKK (Kurdish Workers' Party)—is much narrower. More a social movement than a political party, the PKK was established to bring recognition, if not outright independence, to Kurds living in Turkey. While the PKK grew out of Kurdish nationalism, however, its roots were in leftist revolutionary traditions.

Marcus begins with the 1978 gathering in southeast Turkey where the PKK was founded and then tracks its development, principally through the personal history of its longtime leader Abdullah Ocalan. That might seem strange, but it is difficult to separate the party from its leader, since Ocalan has led the party and has been its driving force from the start. Yet as Marcus frequently points out, Ocalan's position as leader has come at a high cost, because of his consolidation of power both within the PKK and against competing parties. Marcus's story leads to the conclusion that Ocalan's need for absolute control produced not only several purges but poor and inflexible strategies. Too often suggestions for making the PKK more effective were dealt with by Ocalan as threats to his leadership and authority.

Using data from "close to 100" interviewees, Marcus explains how the PKK evolved until Ocalan's capture in 1999. The intrigue behind that event is by itself worth the price of the book. The depth of Marcus's reporting on the PKK's early years is unfortunately offset by the brevity of her coverage of events

since Ocalan's arrest. Although she does include a convenient time line, an index of the principal players and informants would have been a valuable aid to the reader.

*Blood and Belief* will be of interest not only to scholars of Kurdish and Turkish history but to anyone interested in the development of political movements and parties and in how power is consolidated. *Invisible Nation* offers an excellent, readable overview of the Kurdish experience in Iraq, especially since the Gulf war of 1991. These books document two different approaches taken by a social group long oppressed. Both raise questions about the cost and feasibility of self-determination, given the growing permeability of national boundaries. Another issue is the viability of using terrorism as a way to get recognition or press for one's rights, however legitimate they may seem. A lesson for national leaders is that the more you deny the identity of a social group (for years the government of Turkey claimed there were no Kurds, only mountain Turks) and its right to self-expression, the more you sow the seeds for insurrection and rebellion.

Despite their geopolitical separation, which contributes to the tendency to collude with or against each other, the future for the Kurds seems brighter than ever. Marcus shows that they can organize themselves effectively, while Lawrence suggests that with autonomy and better economic times, historical animosities can be set aside. Both authors have added pages to Kurdish history.

ANTHONY DIBELLA  
Naval War College



Ebadi, Shirin. *Iran Awakening: One Woman's Journey to Reclaim Her Life and Country*. New York: Random House, 2007. 256pp. \$14.95

Nasr, Vali. *The Shia Revival: How Conflicts within Islam Will Shape the Future*. New York: W. W. Norton, 2007. 240pp. \$14.95

Since the 1979 Islamic Revolution, Iran has posed a serious dilemma for regional and global peace and security. Today, Iran is more perplexing and ominous than ever, thanks to President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's threatening rants and Iran's supposed nuclear ambitions.

Two books about Iran and Shiism are must reads to understand better the current dilemma in the Middle East and its ramifications for global security. Nobel Peace Prize laureate Shirin Ebadi's autobiography *Iran Awakening* and Vali Nasr's *The Shia Revival* provide unique insights and analyses of the power-hungry clerics ruling Iran and of the Sunni-versus-Shia paradigm.

Shirin Ebadi's personal story about her upbringing in Iran, first under Shah Pahlavi and then under the Islamic Revolution that brought Ayatollah Khomeini to power, is captivating. Each chapter contains shocking developments, but nothing grabs the reader more than the prologue, in which she describes her surreal discovery that she is next on the revolutionary clerics' hit list. The Shia revolutionary paradigm that evolved in Khomeini's Iran proved as repressive and brutal as the shah's reign. Particularly bewildering was the Shia messianic belief in the return of the Mahdi—the “hidden imam”—whose arrival would be preceded by the apocalypse. Equally provocative is the nearly hypnotic fervor with

which the Shia sought martyrdom, especially when they fought Saddam Hussein during the Iran-Iraq War (1980–88). The scale of destruction and loss of human life was staggering, yet Iranians volunteered to fill the front lines in droves. Shirin Ebadi vividly describes these strange, violent events, as well as the ideological earthquakes in Iran and the state of fear that pervaded the very air people breathed.

As a human-rights lawyer, Shirin Ebadi has taken on cases that were extremely perilous to her and her colleagues. She has particularly involved herself in cases of gross violations against women and children. Both men and women, young and old, underwent torture, disappeared, or languished in Iranian prisons. Extrajudicial executions and assassinations were not uncommon. In 2003 Shirin Ebadi was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. In chapter 12 she describes her strange elation in being chosen, and how her fellow Iranians reacted—the authorities were unhappy, but the people, especially the women, were ecstatic. Today, Shirin Ebadi continues to work as a human-rights lawyer in Iran, despite continuous threats to her life.

Vali Nasr's book illustrates the patterns of conflicts between Shias and Sunnis throughout Islamic history. In *The Shia Revival* he explains how he believes these patterns will continue to shape regional politics in the Middle East and South Asia. It is a book to which U.S. policy makers, military, and intelligence groups should pay close attention. Nasr has the ability to do something that probably no other "analyst" has done—to explain the mind-set of the Sunni and Shia leaders and their followers, and why they have such deeply

emotive sentiments about themselves and resentments toward each other. These sentiments and resentments, Nasr is convinced, are affecting politics in post-Saddam Iraq and have ramifications for regional and global security. The book's subtitle states his theory that it is the many conflicts within Islam that will shape the future. All we need to do is look at what is happening in Iraq, and other parts of the Islamic world, to see that this is true.

The Sunni-Shia rivalry is as old as Islam itself. Today, for military and security strategy purposes, it is especially important to understand the political, sociocultural, religious, historical, and even economic variables affecting the Sunnis and Shias. For example, the Shias tipped the balance of power when they ruled the Islamic empire during the Fatimid dynasty. However, the Fatimids were not successful in expelling the crusaders from Jerusalem. The Sunnis stepped in and victoriously fought the crusaders, eventually tipping the balance of power back into their hands.

The Sunnis and Shias fear that the same power struggle will take place today in Iraq. This time, it is the Americans who invaded Iraq, providing the opportunity for the Sunnis and Shias to play the power game once again. In the long run, global peace and security are at stake.

HAYAT ALVI-AZIZ  
Naval War College



Crile, George. *Charlie Wilson's War: The Extraordinary Story of How the Wildest Man in Congress and a Rogue CIA Agent Changed the History of Our Times*. New York: Grove, 2004. 560pp. \$14.95

A longtime best seller in its tenth printing, this important book received a boost in December 2007 when the popular movie of the same name brought this story—CIA's secret proxy war in Afghanistan against the Soviet Union—to the big screen. Crile's painstaking account of the complex chain of events and of the powerful personalities that produced the most successful covert war in U.S. history is the result of extensive research, countless interviews, travel, and personal interaction with most of the key characters in this real-life drama. Over a period of fifteen years of research and reporting, George Crile traveled repeatedly to Afghanistan, Pakistan, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Kuwait, and Israel and throughout the United States to interview the many who played prominently in bringing about the Afghan mujahideen victory over the Soviet Union's Red Army in early 1989.

Reading more like a good spy novel than the historical and factual piece of reporting that it is, the book takes the reader through the fascinating story of how the CIA gained support and achieved victory due, in large measure, to the backing and behind-the-scenes political and relationship maneuverings of Texas congressman Charlie Wilson and CIA operative Gust Avrakotos. The extensive cast of characters includes many other prominent figures in the U.S. government; Texas society; and the governments and intelligence services of Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and

Israel. The author's source notes at the end of the book give a sense of the grand scope of this story, which is still playing out today.

Crile's career, spanning thirty years with CBS, most notably as a producer for *60 Minutes* and *60 Minutes II*, positioned him to be a part of this epic as it unfolded. A two-time winner of the Edgar R. Murrow Award for broadcast journalism, he shows his penchant for bringing a complex story to the reader in an evocative, entertaining, and compelling way.

For students of national-security decision making, foreign policy, U.S. and international politics, and the processes that ultimately result in decisive action, this book provides an insight into how things really transpired during the Reagan administration's support of the Afghan freedom fighters. The author's epilogue, a valuable resource for the student interested in the history and effects of this period, examines the long-term unintended consequences of both U.S. support and periods of nonsupport over four presidential administrations. Some of these consequences include the current negative opinion of the United States in the Muslim world, the rise of radical Islam, the attacks of September 11, 2001, and our ongoing conflicts in both Afghanistan and Iraq.

George Crile passed away in 2006. Although he did not live to see his story come to life as a full-length motion picture, he would probably have been pleased to see the renewed interest and intellectual curiosity that the film has brought to his important chronicle of a pivotal time in our history. There are countless lessons and insights here for national security professionals and those interested in the messy processes

and decisions that result in world-changing events.

GENE MILOWICKI  
Naval War College



Dugard, Martin. *The Training Ground: Grant, Lee, Sherman, and Davis in the Mexican War, 1846–1848*. New York: Little, Brown, 2008. 446pp. \$29.99

The English novelist C. S. Forester once observed, concerning soldiers in war, that it was a “coincidence that when destiny had so much to do she should find tools of such high quality ready to hand.” This comment aptly describes the human story line woven throughout *The Training Ground*, Martin Dugard’s spirited and nearly blow-by-blow account of the major battles of the Mexican War. Dugard, author of *The Last Voyage of Columbus* (2005), has written a robust narrative of this conflict describing President James K. Polk’s ambition to expand the territory of the United States. Reaching beyond the formal history, Dugard uses the strong personalities, individual battlefield accomplishments, and close relationships among a small group of professional soldiers who actually fought the war to bring his story to life.

These soldiers, West Point graduates and well-drilled junior officers in a meager U.S. Army, were the human tools “ready to hand” in 1846. Ulysses S. Grant, Robert E. Lee, William Sherman, Jefferson Davis, Thomas J. “Stonewall” Jackson, and others with names remembered today were first exposed to the hardships and brutality of warfare in the conflict with Mexico. The experience gained in combat tactics, engineering, and logistics by this

“brotherhood” hardened its veterans and taught them to lead, lessons that would be evident during the much more horrific bloodshed that was to take place in the U.S. Civil War.

Dugard relates numerous stories of these young officers and their friendships: of Lee assisted by a young George McClellan and supported by Jackson’s mobile gun batteries; “Sam” Grant and Davis charging together into battle; “Pete” (actually James) Longstreet serving as best man at Grant’s postwar wedding; the calmness of Grant and his keen battlefield observation under fire; the savagery of Jackson’s energy; the frustration of Sherman while posted in California; and the courageous, almost supernatural, professionalism of Lee.

In the end, Mexico City and Mexico were conquered, and the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, signed in July 1848, ended the war. Mexico lost vast portions of its northern states, including California, while the still-young United States nearly doubled in size.

The spare and honest Grant wrote of his experiences in Mexico, “I would like to see a truthful history written. Such a history will do full credit to the courage, endurance, and soldierly ability of the American citizen, no matter what section of the country he hailed from, or in what ranks he fought.” As Dugard’s brisk and engrossing story forecasts, the competence of this small brotherhood would be put to the fullest test during the long and bitter conflict between the states. This later war was fought with great determination and violence by the men whom destiny had trained on the same ground—the West Point veterans of the Mexican War.

WILLIAM CALHOUN  
Naval War College

## **REFLECTIONS ON READING**

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*Professor John E. Jackson is the Naval War College's manager for the Navy Professional Reading Program*

In October 2006, on the occasion of the 231st anniversary of the U.S. Navy, the service gave itself a birthday present, in the form of the Navy Professional Reading Program (NPRP). This multifaceted program replaced what had commonly been known as the “Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) Reading List” and the “Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy Reading List.” The CNO did not want a reading *list*, he wanted a reading *program*—the difference being a Navy commitment to making the books readily available in shipboard, squadron, and base libraries, as opposed to simply identifying them for consideration. Ultimately, over sixty-five thousand books were purchased and distributed to nine hundred activities throughout the Navy.

The present CNO, Admiral Gary Roughead, has noted, “Reading, discussing, and understanding the concepts found in these books will improve our ability to think critically and fight smarter. They give us a much greater appreciation of the world and its diverse cultures, a better understanding of our naval heritage, and a clearer sense of what it means to be a sailor. Reading makes us better leaders.”

The identification of books of interest to U.S. Navy mariners can be traced back to the 1820s, when Secretary of the Navy Samuel Southard ordered that every ship be provided with thirty-seven books on subjects ranging from mathematics to philosophy. The complete library for the modern Reading Program consists of sixty books, arranged by subject matter and stratified by the experience levels of readers. The subject-matter categories were selected to match the skills and abilities that sailors must master to serve effectively in the twenty-first-century Navy: critical thinking, joint and combined warfare, regional and cultural awareness, leadership, naval and military heritage, and management and strategic planning.

The NPRP offers suggestions as to books that should be read based upon a sailor’s experience level. The titles are divided into five collections, each collection consisting of twelve books. The collections are:

- Junior Enlisted, suggested for seamen recruits through third-class petty officers
- Leading Petty Officer, suggested for second- and first-class petty officers
- Division Leaders, suggested for chief petty officers and officers in the grades of ensign through lieutenant
- Department/Command Leaders, suggested for senior and master chief petty officers and lieutenant commanders and commanders
- Senior Leaders, suggested for command master chiefs, captains, and flag officers.

Every book has value, and sailors are encouraged to read any book that interests them. Reading at a pace of only two books per year will complete a whole collection in six years, at which point sailors should be preparing for promotion and can commence reading the next full collection. Completion of all the books in a given collection is a measurable goal, achievable with reasonable effort. NPRP is a voluntary program, and no one will be penalized for nonparticipation. Sailors who *do* take advantage of the NPRP, however, will benefit from increased knowledge, greater understanding of issues important to Navy leaders, and a general enrichment of their lives as professionals and as citizens. More information on the program can be found at [www.navyreading.navy.mil](http://www.navyreading.navy.mil).

The books in the initial NPRP were recommended by a Navy Professional Reading Program Advisory Group; for every title approved by CNO, a half-dozen others were considered. The Advisory Group continually evaluates new books for inclusion in the program. The group's philosophy is to maintain as much stability in the list as possible (in order to enable readers to read systematically a specific series of books), yet to embrace the degree of incremental change necessary to reflect the thinking embodied in new works.

The first revision to the program since its inception, "Navy Reading 2.0," was implemented in October 2008. In it the classic novel about personal relationships in colonial India, *A Passage to India*, by E. M. Forster, was replaced by *The Elephant and the Dragon*, by Robyn Meredith, about the economic and political growth of India and China. *Leadership*, by Rudy Giuliani, a book about political and business leadership, was replaced by *Aircraft Carriers at War*, in which a former Chief of Naval Operations, James Holloway, examines over four decades of Navy leadership in war and peace. *Recognizing Islam*, by Michael Gilsean, the program's second title on the subject of Islam, was replaced by *Forgotten Continent*, by Michael Reid, focusing on Latin America. *Not a Good Day to Die*, by Sean Naylor, which reports on Operation ANACONDA, was replaced by Marcus Luttrell's *Lone Survivor*, an inspirational book about teamwork and dedication

within a SEAL team in Afghanistan. Finally, a classic novel about seamen in the age of sail, Herman Melville's *White Jacket*, was replaced by Ian Toll's *Six Frigates*, an award-winning book on the founding of the U.S. Navy.

These changes make the NPPR even more relevant, and should further increase participation in a program that helps create twenty-first-century leaders—one book at a time!

JOHN E. JACKSON

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